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About Brian Tracy

Brian Tracy is one of the world's leading authorities on personal and business success. His fast-moving talks and seminars on leadership, sales, managerial effectiveness and business strategy are loaded with powerful, proven ideas and strategies that people can apply immediately to get better results in every area.

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A Balanced Life

By: Brian Tracy

According to psychologist Sidney Jourard, fully 85 percent of your happiness in life will come from your personal relationships. Your interactions and the time that you spend with the people you care about will be the major source of the pleasure, enjoyment and satisfaction that you derive daily. The other 15 percent of your happiness will come from your accomplishments. Unfortunately, many people lose sight of what is truly important, and they allow the tail to wag the dog. They sacrifice their relationships, their major source of happiness, to accomplish more in their careers. But one's career, at best, can be only a minor source—and a temporary one, at that—of the happiness and satisfaction that everyone wants.

There is no perfect answer to the key question of how to achieve balance in our lives, but there are a number of ideas that can help you to be and have and do more in the areas that are important to you. These ideas often require changes and modifications in the way you think and use your time, but the price is well worth it. You will find that by reorganizing your life in little ways, you can create an existence that gives you the highest quality and quantity of satisfaction overall. And this must be your guiding purpose.

The ancient Greeks had two famous sayings: “Man, know thyself” and “Moderation in all things.” Taken together, those two ideas are a good starting point for achieving the balance that you desire. With regard to knowing thyself, it is very important to give some serious thought to what you really value in life. All trade-offs and choices are based on your values, and all stress and unhappiness come from believing and valuing one thing and, yet, finding yourself doing another. Only when your values and your activities are congruent do you feel happy and at peace with yourself.

So knowing yourself means knowing what you really value, knowing what is really important to you. The superior man or woman decides what is right before he or she decides what is possible. The advanced human being organizes his or her life to assure that everything that he or she is doing is consistent with his or her true values. It is essential for you to organize your life around yourself, rather than to organize yourself around the demands of your external world.

The second quote, “Moderation in all things,” is a wonderful and important dictate for successful living. But, at the same time, you know that you can't really be successful in any area by being moderate in that area. Peter Drucker once wrote, “Wherever you find something getting done, you find a monomaniac with a mission.” You know that single-minded concentration on a goal or objective is absolutely necessary for achievement of any kind in a competitive society.

So what's the solution? Over the years, I have worked with tens of thousands of men and women who have spent a lot of time and effort struggling to achieve balance in their lives. I have found that there is a simple formula; it is simple in that it is easy to explain, but you need tremendous self-discipline and persistence to implement it in your life.

The formula revolves around a concept of time management, or what you might want to call life management. Time management is really a form of personal management in which you organize your 24 hours a day in such a way that they give you the greatest possible return of happiness and contentment.

The key to time management, after you have determined your values and the goals that are in harmony with those values, is to set both priorities and posteriorities. The importance of setting priorities is obvious. You make a list of all the things that you can possibly do and then select from that list the things that are most important to you based on everything you know about yourself, about others and about your responsibilities. The setting of posteriorities is often overlooked. It is when you carefully decide which things you are going to stop doing so that you will have enough time to start doing something else.

The greatest single shortage we experience in America today is that of time. We suffer from what has been called "time poverty." Men and women everywhere feel that their biggest single challenge is that they simply do not have enough time to do all the things that they have to do or want to do. People today feel pressured from all sides and are under an inordinate amount of stress. They feel overworked, fatigued and incapable of fulfilling all the responsibilities that they have taken on.

The starting point to alleviate this time poverty is to stop and think. Most people are so busy rushing back and forth that they seldom take the time to think seriously about who they are and why they are doing what they are doing. They engage in frantic activity, instead of thoughtful analysis. They get so busy climbing the ladder of success that they lose sight of the fact that the ladder may be leaning against the wrong building.

When my wife, Barbara, and I started our family, we were faced with a common dilemma: how can we balance the demands of work and home with the finite amount of time we are all given?

Here's the answer I discovered: The key to success in a busy society is to devote your time to only two areas during the period of time when your family needs you, when your children are between the ages of birth to about 18 to 20 years. During this period of time, you need to curtail virtually all of your outside activities. You need to focus on two major areas—your family and your career—as I have done over the years. You need to place your family's needs above all else and then organize your work schedule so that you can satisfy those needs on a regular basis. Then, when you work, you must concentrate single-mindedly on doing an excellent job.

Most people are time wasters. They waste their own time, and they waste your time as well. To be successful and happy, you must discipline yourself to work all the time you work. The average employee works at about 50 percent of capacity. Fully 80 percent of people working today are underemployed in that their jobs do not really demand their full capacities. Only 5 percent of workers surveyed recently felt that they were working at the outside limits of their potentials.

But this is not for you. You must resolve to work all the time you work. You must decide that from the time you start in the morning until the time you finish in the evening, you will work 100 percent of the time. Even if no one is watching you, you should be aware that everyone is watching you. Everybody knows everything. In every company, everyone knows who is working and who is not. Your job must be to work all the time you work. If people come by and want to chat, you simply smile at them and say, "Could we talk about this later?" Tell them that you have to get back to work.

Have a written list, and work on your list every day. Write down everything as it comes up, and add it to your list. Set priorities on your time, and be certain that you are working on the things that are most important to your boss and to your company. Refuse to get drawn into the time-wasting activities of the people around you. Work all the time you work.

Remember that to be successful, you must become a monomaniac with a mission. This is true today, and it has always been true in our competitive society. To be successful at your job, you must work fast and efficiently and nonstop all the time you are on the payroll. You must become an expert at time management. You must become so efficient and effective that you get twice as much done as anyone else. In this way, you will advance your career at the fastest rate possible, and you will also be on top of your job most of the time, and it will be unnecessary for you to take work home for the evenings and weekends.

Then, when you have finished your work, you can devote your full attention to your family and to the other important people in your life. The Bible says, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." One of the meanings of this is that if you are thinking about your work while you are with your family, or if you are thinking about your family when you are at work, you end up accomplishing far less in each area. However, if you are on top of your work, when you come home you can devote yourself single-mindedly—again, like a monomaniac—to your relationships and to enhancing the quality of your interactions with the most important people in your life.

The key to a happy family life is communication. And it is not quality of time but quantity of time that counts. Quality moments—those little moments that are precious and important—come unbidden and, usually, unexpectedly. They arise during the process of spending a large quantity of uninterrupted time with one or more people. You cannot dictate those moments in advance. You cannot decide to have quality time. You do not go to it. It comes to you.

There are a variety of ways to extract the greatest amount of quality and happiness from your relationships with the members of your family. Perhaps the most important is to spend unbroken time with your spouse on a daily basis. Of course, you should spend time together talking after the children have gone to bed, but you should also seek out and utilize small segments of time during the morning and early evening during which you can communicate and interact. One of the most important things that couples can do is spend the first 30 to 60 minutes after work debriefing each other and discussing the day's activities.

Your children also have a tremendous need to communicate with you. In fact, in my research on how to raise super kids, I found that the one factor that was more important than any other was the amount of one-on-one time that the parents spent with the children. When parents don't spend a lot of time with their children individually, they send a message to their children that they are not very valuable or important. Children then react by experiencing feelings of inferiority, lowered self-esteem, and negative self-images, and this is expressed in poor grades and behavioral problems. But when the parents take the time to sit down with their children and ask questions and listen to what is going on in their minds, the children tend to feel a deep sense of value and importance that is manifested in self-confidence, happiness, and good relationships with others.

The key is learning to use your time better. You cannot get more hours out of each day, but you can put more of yourself into each of those hours. Turn off the television and spend time talking with the members of your family. Never read newspaper or books when a member of your family wants to communicate with you. Put the reading material aside. Concentrate single-mindedly on the most important people in your world. Everything else can wait.

In regard to your work and family, continually ask yourself, "What is the most valuable use of my time right now?" Consider if what you are doing today will matter a week or a year from today. Sometimes, we become preoccupied with small things that are not really important in the long run. But what is important in the long run is the quality of our home life.

You don't have to be a superman or superwoman to properly balance the demands of your work and the needs of your family. You must, however, be more thoughtful, be a better planner, use your time more effectively, and continually think of ways to enhance the quality of your life in both areas. If you set this as a goal and resolve to work toward it every day, you will gradually become far more efficient, far more effective, and a far happier human being. And that's the most important thing of all.

Becoming a Person of Integrity

By: Brian Tracy

Integrity is a value, like persistence, courage and industriousness. Even more than that, it is the value that guarantees all the other values. You are a good person to the degree to which you live your life consistent with the highest values that you espouse. Integrity is the quality that locks in your values and causes you to live consistent with them.

Integrity is the foundation of character. And character development is one of the most important activities you can engage in. Working on your character means disciplining yourself to do more and more of those things that a thoroughly honest person would do, under all circumstances.

To be impeccably honest with others, you must first be impeccably honest with yourself. You must be true to yourself. You must be true to the very best that is in you, to the very best that you know. Only a person who is living consistent with his or her highest values and virtues is really living a life of integrity. And when you commit to living this kind of life, you will find yourself continually raising your own standards, continually refining your definition of integrity and honesty.

You can tell how high your level of integrity is by simply looking at the things you do in your day-to-day life. You can look at your reactions and responses to the inevitable ups and downs of life. You can observe the behaviors you typically engage in and you will then know the person you are.

The external manifestation of high integrity is high-quality work. A person who is totally honest with himself or herself will be someone who does, or strives to do, excellent work on every occasion. The totally honest person recognizes, sometimes unconsciously, that everything he or she does is a statement about who he or she really is as a person.

When you start a little earlier, work a little harder, stay a little later and concentrate on every detail, you are practicing integrity in your work. And whether you know it or not, your true level of integrity is apparent and obvious to everyone around you.

Perhaps the most important rule you will ever learn is that your life only becomes better when you become better.

All of life is lived from the inside out. At the very core of your personality lie your values about yourself and life in general. Your values determine the kind of person you really are. What you believe has defined your character and your personality. It is what you stand for, and what you *won't* stand for, that tells you and the world the kind of person you have become.

Ask yourself this question: What are your five most important values in life? Your answer will reveal an enormous amount about you. What would you pay for, sacrifice for, suffer for and even die for? What would you stand up for, or refuse to lie down for? What are the values that you hold most dear? Think these questions through carefully and, when you get a chance, write down your answers.

Here's another way of asking that question. What men and women, living or dead, do you most admire? Once you pick three or four men or women, the next question is: Why do you admire them? What values, qualities, or virtues do they have that you respect and look up to? Can you articulate those qualities? What is a quality possessed by human beings in general that you most respect? This is the starting point for determining your values. The answers to these questions form the foundation of your character and your personality.

Once you have determined your five major values, you should now organize them in order of importance. What is your first, most important value? What is your second value? What is your third value? And so on. Ranking your values is one of the very best and fastest ways to define your character.

Remember, a higher order value will always take precedence over a lower order value. Whenever you are forced to choose between acting on one value or another, you always choose the value that is the highest on your own personal hierarchy.

Who you are, in your heart, is evidenced by what you do on a day-to-day basis, especially when you are pushed into a position where you have to make a choice between two values or alternatives.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Guard your integrity as a sacred thing." In study after study, the quality of integrity, or a person's adherence to values, ranks as the number one quality sought in every field. When it comes to determining whom they will do business with, customers rank the honesty of a salesperson as the most important single quality. Even if a they feel that a salesperson's product, quality and price is superior, customers will not buy from that salesperson if they feel that he or she is lacking in honesty and character.

Likewise, integrity is the number one quality of leadership. Integrity in leadership is expressed in terms of constancy and consistency. It is manifested in an absolute devotion to keeping one's word. The glue that holds all relationships together—including the relationship between the leader and the led—is trust, and trust is based on integrity.

Integrity is so important that functioning in our society would be impossible without it. We could not make even a simple purchase without a high level of confidence that the price was honest and that the change was correct. The most successful individuals and companies in America are those with reputations of high integrity among everyone they deal with. This level of integrity builds the confidence that others have in them and enables them to do more business than their competitors whose ethics may be a little shaky.

Earl Nightingale once wrote, "If honesty did not exist, it would have to be invented, as it is the surest way of getting rich." A study at Harvard University concluded that the most valuable asset that a company has is how it is known to its customers—its reputation.

By the same token, your greatest personal asset is the way that you are known to your customers. It is your personal reputation for keeping your word and fulfilling your commitments. Your integrity precedes you and affects all of your interactions with other people.

There are several things you can do to move you more rapidly toward becoming the kind of person that you know you are capable of becoming. The first, as I mentioned, is to decide upon your five most important values in life. Organize them in order of priority. Then write a brief paragraph defining what each of those values means to you. A value combined with a definition becomes an organizing principle—a statement that you can use to help you make better decisions. It is a measure and standard which enables you to know how closely you are adhering to your innermost beliefs and convictions.

The second step to developing integrity and character in yourself is to study men and women of great character. Study the lives and stories of people like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale, Susan B. Anthony and Margaret Thatcher. Study the people whose strength of character enabled them to change their world. As you read, think about how they would behave if they were facing the difficulties that you face.

Napoleon Hill, in his book, *The Master Key to Riches*, tells about how he created an imaginary board of personal advisors made up of great figures of history. He chose people like Napoleon, Lincoln, Jesus, and Alexander the Great. Whenever he had to make a decision, he would relax deeply and then imagine that the members of his advisory council were sitting at a large table in front of him. He would then ask them what he should do to deal effectively with a particular situation. In time, they would begin to give him answers, observations, and insights that helped him to see more clearly and act more effectively.

You can do the same thing. Select someone that you very much admire for their qualities of courage, tenacity, honesty, or wisdom. Ask yourself, "What would Jesus do in my situation?" or, "What would Lincoln do if he were here at this time?" You will find yourself with guidance that enables you to be the very best person that you can possible be.

The third and most important step in building your integrity has to do with formulating your approach based on the psychology of human behavior. We know that if you feel a particular way, you will act in a manner consistent with that feeling. For

example, if you feel happy, you will act happy. If you feel angry, you will act angry. If you feel courageous, you will act courageously.

But we also know that you don't always start off feeling the way you want to. However, because of the Law of Reversibility, if you act as if you had a particular feeling, the action will generate the feeling consistent with it. You can, in effect, act your way into feeling. You can "fake it until you make it."

You can become a superior human being by consciously acting exactly as the kind of person that you would most like to become. If you behave like an individual of integrity, courage, resolution, persistence and character, you will soon create within yourself the mental structure and habits of such a person. Your actions will become your reality. You will create a personality that is consistent with your highest aspirations.

The more you walk, talk, and behave consistent with your highest values, the more you will like yourself and the better you will feel about yourself. Your self-image will improve and your level of self-acceptance will go up. You will feel stronger, bolder, and more capable of facing any challenge.

There are three primary areas of your life where acting with integrity is crucial. These are the three areas of greatest temptation for forsaking your integrity, as well as the areas of greatest opportunity for building your integrity. When you listen to your inner voice and do what you know to be the right thing in each of these areas, you will have a sense of peace and satisfaction that will lead you on to success and high achievement.

The first area of integrity has to do with your relationships with your family and your friends, the people close to you. Being true to yourself means living in truth with each person in your life. It means refusing to say or do something that you don't believe is right. Living in truth with other people means that you refuse to stay in any situation where you are unhappy with the behavior of another person. You refuse to tolerate it. You refuse to compromise.

Psychologists have determined that most stress and negativity comes from attempting to live in a way that is not congruent with your highest values. It is when your life is out of alignment—when you are doing and saying one thing on the outside, but really feeling and believing something different on the inside—that you feel most unhappy. When you decide to become an individual of character and integrity, your first action will be to neutralize or remove all difficult relationships from your life.

This doesn't mean that you have to go and hit somebody over the head with a stick. It simply means that you honestly confront another person and tell them that you are not happy. Tell them that you would like to reorganize this relationship so that you feel more content and satisfied. If the other person is not willing to make adjustments so that you can be happy, it should be clear to you that you don't want to be in this relationship much longer anyway.

The second area of integrity has to do with your attitude and behavior toward money. Casualness toward money brings casualties in your financial life. You must be fastidious about your treatment of money, especially other people's money. You must guard your credit rating the same way you would guard your honor. You must

pay your bills punctually, or even early. You must keep your promises with regard to your financial commitments.

The third area of integrity has to do with your commitments to others, especially in your business, your work and your sales activities. Always keep your word. Be a man or a woman of honor. If you say that you will do something, do it. If you make a promise, keep it. If you make a commitment, fulfill it. Be known as the kind of person that can be trusted absolutely, no matter what the circumstances.

Your integrity is manifested in your willingness to adhere to the values you hold most dear. It's easy to make promises and hard to keep them, but if you do, every single act of integrity will make your character a little stronger. And as you improve the quality and strength of your character, every other part of your life will improve as well.

Cultivating Your Self-Esteem

By: Brian Tracy

Your self-esteem is probably the most important part of your personality. It precedes and predicts your performance in almost everything you do. It is the energy source or the reactor core of your personality, and how much self-esteem you have determines your levels of vitality, enthusiasm and personal magnetism. People with high self-esteem are more positive, more likable and more effective in every part of their lives.

Everything that you do or say or think will affect your self-esteem. Your job, therefore, is to keep your self-esteem high and positive on a continuing basis.

Probably the best definition of self-esteem is this: the level to which you respect and value yourself as an important, worthwhile person. People with high self-esteem feel terrific about themselves and their lives. When you feel really good about yourself, you tend to be the very best person you can possibly be.

Your level of self-esteem is really your level of "mental fitness." It's a measure of how healthy, hardy, and resilient you are in dealing with the inevitable ups and downs of daily life. Your self-esteem determines how much peace of mind and inner contentment you experience. It is also closely linked to your health and levels of energy. People with high self-esteem are seldom sick and seem to have an inexhaustible flow of energy and enthusiasm that progressively moves them toward their goals.

How much you like and respect yourself also determines the quality of your relationships with people. The more you like and enjoy yourself, the more you will like and enjoy others, and the more they will like you. In fact, when your self-esteem is hurt in any way, the very first thing that is affected is the way you get along with people.

To perform at your best and to feel terrific about yourself, you should be in a perpetual state of self-esteem building and maintenance. Just as you take responsibility for your level of physical fitness, you need to take complete responsibility for the content and quality of your mind.

I have developed a simple formula that contains all the critical elements of self-esteem building, and you can use it on a regular basis to assure maximum performance.

This formula is comprised of six basic elements. They are: goals, standards, success experiences, comparison with others, recognition, and rewards. Let's take them one at a time.

How much you like and respect yourself is directly affected by your goals. The very act of setting big, challenging goals for yourself and making written plans of action to achieve them actually raises your self-esteem, which causes you to feel much better about yourself.

Self-esteem is a condition you experience when you are moving step-by-step toward the accomplishment of something that is important to you. For that reason, it's really important to have clear goals for each part of your life and to continually work toward achieving those goals. Each progressive step causes your self-esteem to go up and makes you feel more positive and effective in everything else you do.

The second element in self-esteem building is having clear standards and values to which you are committed. Men and women with high self-esteem are very clear about what they believe in. The higher your values and ideals are, and the more committed you are to living your life consistent with those values and ideals, the more you will like and respect yourself, and the higher your self-esteem will be.

Lasting self-esteem comes only when your goals and your values are congruent—that is, when they fit into each other like a hand into a glove. Much of the stress that people experience comes from believing one thing and trying to do another. But when your goals and values are in harmony with each other, you feel a wonderful surge of energy and well-being, and that's when you start to make real progress.

Many people tell me that they are unhappy with their job because they can't seem to achieve success no matter how hard they try. I always ask them if they are doing what they really care about and believe in. In many cases, people realize that they are not happy with their job because it is the wrong kind of work for them. Once they change jobs and start doing something that they really enjoy, something that is more consistent with their innermost convictions, they start to make real progress and get a lot of satisfaction out of their work.

The third element in self-esteem building involves having success experiences. Once you have set your goals and standards, it is important that you make them measurable so that you can keep score of your small and large successes along the way. The very act of setting up a goal, breaking it down into smaller parts, and then completing those parts makes you feel like a winner and causes your self-esteem to go up. But remember that you can't hit a target you can't see. You can't feel like a winner unless you clearly lay out the standards by which you are going to measure your success and then achieve those standards.

Let's say that you set a goal to sell a certain amount or earn a certain amount of income in a given year. If you break that down into monthly and weekly goals, and then you achieve the first of those goals, you will feel great about yourself. Each time you reach another milestone, your self-esteem and ability to perform will increase, and you will feel encouraged and enthusiastic about the next challenge.

The fourth element of self-esteem is comparison with others. Leon Festinger of Harvard University concluded that in determining how well we are doing, we do not compare ourselves with abstract standards, but, rather, we compare ourselves with people we know. To feel like a winner, you must know for sure that you are doing as well as or better than someone else. The more you know about how well the others in your field are doing, and the more favorably you compare with them, the more you will feel like a winner, and the higher your self-esteem will be.

Successful people continually compare themselves with other successful people. They think about them and read about them and study their performances, and then they work to surpass them one step at a time. Eventually, successful people reach the point where they compete only with themselves and with their past accomplishments. But this comes after they have moved to the top and left many of their competitors behind.

The next element for self-esteem is recognition of your accomplishments by people whom you respect. To feel really great about yourself, you need the recognition of people you look up to and admire, such as your boss, your coworkers, your spouse and people in your social circle. Whenever you are recognized and praised for any accomplishment by someone whose opinion you hold in high regard, your self-esteem goes up, along with your eagerness and enthusiasm to do even better on the job.

The final element of self-esteem involves rewards that are consistent with your accomplishments. You may work in a field where you receive financial bonuses, status symbols—larger offices, bigger cars—or even plaques and trophies for superior achievement. All of those symbols can have an incredible impact on raising your self-esteem and causing you to feel terrific about yourself.

If, however, your existing situation does not offer the tangible or intangible rewards that are necessary for you to build and maintain your self-esteem, you must create rewards for yourself. One of the smartest things you can do is to design a system for giving yourself rewards for both small and large accomplishments as you move progressively toward your goals. For example, people who do telephone prospecting will often treat themselves to a cup of coffee after every 10 calls. After 25 calls, they will reward themselves with a walk around the building or the block. After 50 calls, they will go out to lunch. Each of those rewards serves as an incentive that motivates them to repeat the performance. The end result is success, enthusiasm, and high self-esteem.

Whether or not your current environment provides the six elements of self-esteem building—goals, standards, success experiences, comparison with others, recognition, and rewards—you need to establish your own structure and take full responsibility for building yourself up on a regular basis.

Of course, it is possible to like yourself in the abstract, to think of yourself as a valuable and worthwhile person, but this tends to be a very shaky form of self-esteem that is easily knocked down by a negative experience or a temporary disappointment. The only real way for you to absolutely know that you are a valuable and worthwhile person is for you to make the effort, overcome the obstacles and pay the price to bring these elements into your life. When you have that foundation, you will experience a form of mental fitness and unshakable optimism that will sustain you through failure and propel you to success.

Empowering Others

By: Brian Tracy

Once you know how to empower people, how to motivate and inspire them, they will want to work with you to help you achieve your goals in everything you do. Your ability to enlist the knowledge, energy and resources of others enables you to become a multiplication sign, to leverage yourself so that you accomplish far more than the average person and in a far shorter period of time.

There are three types of people that you want to and need to empower on a regular basis. They are, first of all, the people closest to you: your family, your friends, your spouse and your children. Second are your work relationships: your staff, your coworkers, your peers, your colleagues and even your boss. Third are all the other people that you interact with in your day-to-day life: your customers, your suppliers, your banker, the people with whom you deal in stores, restaurants, airplanes, hotels and everywhere else. In each case, your ability to get people to help you is what will make you a more powerful and effective person.

Empower means “putting power into,” and it can also mean “bringing energy and enthusiasm out of.” So the first step in empowering people is to refrain from doing anything that disempowers them or reduces their energy and enthusiasm for what they are doing.

With regard to the first group, those people closest to you, there are several simple things that you can do every single day to empower them and make them feel good about themselves.

The deepest need that each person has is for self-esteem, a sense of being important, valuable, and worthwhile. Everything that you do in your interactions with others affects their self-esteem in some way. You already have an excellent frame of reference to determine the things that you can do to boost the self-esteem and therefore the sense of personal power of those around you. Give them what you'd like for yourself.

Perhaps the simplest way to make another person feel good about himself or herself is your continuous expressions of appreciation for everything that person does for you, large or small. Say “thank you” on every occasion. Thank your spouse for everything that he or she does for you. Thank your children for their cooperation and support in everything that they do around the house. Thank your friends for the smallest of kindnesses. The more you thank other people for doing things for you, the more things those other people will want to do.

Every time you thank another person, you cause that person to like themselves better. You raise their self-esteem and improve their self-image. You cause them to feel more important. You make them feel that what they did was valuable and worthwhile. You empower them.

And the wonderful thing about thanking other people is that, every time you say the words “thank you,” you like yourself better as well. You feel better inside. You feel happier and more content with yourself and life. You feel more fully integrated and positive about what you are doing. When you develop an attitude of gratitude that

flows forth from you in all of your interactions with others, you will be amazed at how popular you will become and how eager others will be to help you in whatever you are doing.

The second way to make people feel important, to raise their self-esteem and give them a sense of power and energy, is by the generous use of praise and approval. Psychological tests show that, when children are praised by the people that they look up to, their energy levels rise, their heart rates and respiratory rates increase and they feel happier about themselves overall.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson in Ken Blanchard's book *The One Minute Manager* is his recommendation to be giving "one-minute praises" at every opportunity. If you go around your home and through your social relationships praising and giving genuine and honest approval to people for their accomplishments, large and small, you will be amazed at how much more people like you and how much more willing they are to help you achieve your goals.

There is a psychological law of reciprocity that says, "If you make me feel good about myself, I will find a way to make you feel good about yourself." In other words, people will always look for ways to reciprocate your kindnesses toward them. When you look for every opportunity to do and say things that make other people feel good about themselves, you will be astonished at not only how good you feel, but at the wonderful things that begin to happen all around you.

The third way to empower others, to build their self-esteem and make them feel important is simply to pay close attention to them when they talk. The great majority of people are so busy trying to be heard that they become impatient when others are talking. But this is not for you. Remember, the most important single activity that takes place over time is listening intently to the other person when he or she is talking and expressing himself or herself.

Again, the three general rules for empowering the people around you, which apply to everyone you meet, are appreciation, approval, and attention. Voice your thanks and gratitude to others on every occasion. Praise them for every accomplishment. And pay close attention to them when they talk and want to interact with you. These three behaviors alone will make you a master of human interaction and will greatly empower the people around you.

It's certainly possible for you to get the cooperation of others by threatening or brow-beating them, but you will only get minimal cooperation, minimal output, and minimal assistance. To move to the top of your field, you must appeal to people's inner motivations and drives, their deepest emotions.

What motivates people in the world of work? The biggest motivator is clarity. People need to know exactly what it is that they are supposed to do. They need to know why they are supposed to do it and how it fits into the big picture. They need to know how it will be measured, and when it is due. They need to know what standard of quality is expected and how their efforts affect the work of others. The greater the clarity that a person has about his or her assignment and the order of priority in which it is to be done, the happier and more empowered he or she feels right from the start.

On the other hand, the biggest demotivator in the world of work is *not* knowing what is expected. It is being in the dark about what is supposed to be done and in

what order of priority. People are especially demotivated when they don't know why they are doing a task or how it fits into the overall goals of the company or department.

The more time you spend talking to your people and inviting their feedback and comments on the work, the more empowered they will be to do the work well. The word we are talking about in empowerment in work is the word "ownership." Your job is to transfer the ownership into the heart and mind of the employee. When he or she feels personal ownership for a job and the responsibility for doing it well, he or she will be completely empowered. This is one of the most important aspects of the art of management.

Another major motivator at work is consideration. Employees report that the best managers they ever had were people who cared about them as people and as friends. These managers took the time to ask them questions about their lives, and to listen patiently while they talked about the dilemmas and problems and situations in their families. The more that the employees felt that the boss liked them and respected them, the more empowered and motivated they felt.

The flip side of this motivator is the demotivating feeling that the boss doesn't care. This is almost invariably expressed in a lack of recognition, a lack of approval, a lack of appreciation and a general failure to pay attention to the employee over time.

Remember, the amount of time that you spend talking to and listening to an employee is a signal to that employee that he or she is important to you and to the company. This is why the very best bosses spend a lot of time walking around and chatting with their employees. They sit with them for lunch and coffee. They invite their comments and encourage open discussion and disagreements about work. They create an environment where people feel that the work belongs to them as well as to the company. In that environment, employees feel good about themselves and more fully committed to doing the job and doing it well.

To empower and motivate the third group of people, the people around you, your customers, your suppliers, your bankers and so on, you simply need to practice what we've already talked about. The most important of all is that you be a genuine, positive and cheerful person. You develop a positive mental attitude. You be the kind of person from whom, "never is heard a discouraging word." You are easygoing, genial, friendly, patient, tolerant and open minded. You make people feel comfortable being around you.

Remember, everyone is primarily emotional. Everything that people do, or refrain from doing, is triggered by their deeper emotions. Your job is to connect with their higher and more positive emotions so they feel so good about you they want to help you and please you in some way.

For example, whenever you go into a crowded restaurant, or get on a busy plane, or go up to a busy hotel desk, instead of becoming impatient with the slow rate of service, you should put yourself in the other person's place, practice the Golden Rule, and ask them how they are doing.

Whenever I go into a busy restaurant, I always ask the waiter for his or her name. Then I address them by name while observing sympathetically, "You seem to be working hard today."

From that moment on, the waiter always gives me special attention. Why? Because I took the time to empathize with his or situation rather than looking for sympathy for mine.

Try this approach with all the people at your workplace. Observe their situation and empathize with how hard they are working, how many difficulties they have, how overloaded they are, and so on. It is absolutely amazing how much better people feel about you when you take a special interest in them, rather than just thinking about yourself.

In life, you always have a choice. You can either do everything yourself or you can get others to help you do some of the work. Our entire economic structure is built on the principle of specialization. Specialization means that some people become very good at doing certain tasks while other people become very good at doing other tasks.

For you to achieve your full potential, you must contribute the greatest amount of value possible. You must concentrate all your energies on doing certain specialized tasks in an excellent fashion so that you can be paid the amount you want to earn and you can move ahead at the rate you want to move ahead. But in order for you to specialize and do what you are best at, and more of it, you must delegate, relegate and outsource virtually everything else.

Some non-managers feel that the subject of delegation does not apply to them. But even when you ask your child to bring you the newspaper, you are delegating a task. When you go out to lunch rather than making it yourself, you are delegating. When you go into a full service gas station rather than filling your own tank, again, you are delegating. You are in a process of continuous delegation from the time you get up in the morning until the time you go to sleep at night. The only question is how you are at it.

Your ability to delegate effectively, which requires that you inspire and empower others to help you willingly, will determine how fast you move ahead. It will determine how much you earn in your job. It will determine the quality and quantity of your productivity. It will determine your ultimate financial success in life. And the key to all of this is your ability to empower others.

Everyone's A Salesperson

By: Brian Tracy

Sometimes I ask my seminar attendees, "How many people here are in sales?" It's interesting to watch how people respond to that question. There are always a few people who will raise a hand at first, and then another hand goes up, and then another, and soon perhaps half the people in the room have a hand up, even though they may be in fields such as management, administration, finance and accounting.

I then smile and ask again, "Now, how many people here are *really* in sales?" At this point, virtually every person in the room has raised a hand. We all smile at the realization that each of us is in the business of selling every single day.

From the time you get up in the morning until the time you go to bed at night, you are negotiating, communicating, persuading, and influencing — trying to get people to cooperate with you to accomplish the things that you want them to accomplish. So

the pivotal question with regard to selling is not if you are doing it, but if you are good at it.

All top executives are excellent salespeople. All effective parents are wonderful salespeople. All effective employees use sales techniques to get their coworkers and bosses to go along with them and to cooperate with them in getting the job done. Everyone who is effective in virtually any area of life that involves other people is an excellent salesperson of some kind.

Unfortunately, over the years, a stigma has grown up around the selling profession. Many people feel that selling is a low-level type of activity and they don't like to be associated with it — even people who are in sales! Virtually no colleges or universities have a “Department of Selling,” even though almost 15 million Americans make their living by selling something to someone. It is the largest single, identifiable occupational group in the United States.

Salespeople are the movers and shakers in every business and industry. They are the key people who create the demand for all the products and services that keep everyone employed at every other occupation.

The basis for all successful sales efforts is a discipline called gap analysis. Gap analysis is clearly defining what your idea, product, or service can do for a person and then deciding how to demonstrate that in a compelling way.

People tend to buy based on how they anticipate feeling as a result of owning and enjoying a particular product or service. In fact, they make their decision based on whether or not that feeling is more valuable to them than the money they will have to part with.

In selling or persuading anyone to do anything, there is an “ABC theory of motivation” that is very powerful. In it, “A” represents a state of “felt dissatisfaction.” This means that the individual is not satisfied with his or her current situation or condition.

The “C” represents a state of greater satisfaction. If the individual can get to this state, the felt dissatisfaction in his or her current situation will be relieved.

The “B” in this ABC theory is the product, service, idea, action, or activity that you are trying to persuade the person to acquire or to engage in.

So, to repeat, the “A” is the existing state of dissatisfaction. The “C” is the future anticipated state of greater satisfaction or relieved dissatisfaction. The “B” is what you are offering as a means to that relief.

According to this theory, getting people to do something that they would not have done in the absence of your influence is possible only when a gap exists between their current situation and the ideal situation that they would like to enjoy.

The very best persuaders, communicators, and salespeople are those who concentrate their attention on identifying the exact gap that exists and determining how big it is. They then focus on widening that gap in every possible way, until the prospect begins to feel more and more dissatisfied with his or her current situation

and more and more desirous of enjoying the preferable situation that is achievable by the use of the product, service, or idea.

Let me give you an example. I was quite happy with my car until recently. It was a nice car, it was paid off, and it was running fine. Then I took it in to the dealership for a regular checkup and service. The service manager did an excellent job of analysis and came back to me with the sad fact that the car required not only new tires all around, but also a complete new set of brakes, a wheel alignment, and a lot of other things. The total cost would be about \$3,000.

You can imagine my reaction. I was shocked. I had no idea that the car required that much service. Well, I thought, what the heck, at least it's cheaper than buying a new car. Then a salesman at the dealership pointed out to me that the car would drop another \$2,000 in value at the turn of the model year, which was coming up in about 60 days. He told me that if I kept the car, and repaired it, I would lose \$5,000 off the total value of the car, which I could never recover.

Suddenly, I went from complacency about my car to dissatisfaction, and then to great dissatisfaction and an intense desire to improve my condition in some way. The salesman then went on to explain that he could take my car as a down payment on a brand new luxury automobile, with no cash out of my pocket, and he could spread the payments over three, four, or five years so that the cost to me would be very reasonable. At that, all my resistance vanished. I started out satisfied with my car, then became so dissatisfied with it that I bought a brand new, expensive luxury car — and, surprisingly enough, I drove away happy.

Here are some of the key points in gap analysis that my salesman applied. You can use these same techniques to persuade people to move from where they are to where you want them to be.

Remember that people buy solutions to their problems, not products or services. In fact, as a salesperson, you need to be more of a problem finder than a vendor. The more you focus on the problem, or the gap that exists between the real and the ideal in the customer situation, the faster you will find a place where your product or service can plug the gap.

The bigger the problem that the customer or prospect has, the bigger the potential sale. One of the most powerful questions you can ask a person is, "How much is that problem costing you?" Help him to identify not only the obvious, direct costs, but also the not-so-obvious, indirect costs.

Ask the prospect, "What are the implications? What is the meaning of that problem to you? What other things does it affect in your work or personal life?"

The most astute salespeople are those who are capable of finding a small gap and then expanding it into a wide gap. They are capable of discovering a small problem or dissatisfaction in the mind of the prospect and then, by questioning and commenting, increase it until the prospect develops an intense desire for the solution they are offering.

If you are selling to companies, you have to ask what the decision makers in the organization want to accomplish. What is the gap between where they are and where they want to be? How is the decision maker rewarded, and for what? What does the

decision maker have to do to earn the respect, esteem, and support of this or her superiors and coworkers?

One of the deepest subconscious needs of all people is the need for self-esteem, for feeling valuable, important, and worthwhile. If you can ascertain what people need to do to increase their self-esteem and their perceived value in their organization, and then show them that by using your product or service, they can earn the approval and appreciation of the people around them and above them, they will often be very motivated to buy what you are selling.

When you meet prospects for the first time, you will find that they are usually unaware that a gap exists between where they are and where they could be. They will often say things like, "I'm not interested," or "I can't afford it," or "We're quite happy with our current situation." These are normal and natural responses. No one likes to change. Your job is to describe a state of even greater satisfaction that they could enjoy if they did something different. Virtually all advertising is aimed at showing people how much better off they could be with a product or service that they have not yet acquired.

Gap analysis is based on asking good questions — questions focused on discovering problems that might be troubling the prospect. There is a direct correlation between the use of good questioning techniques and sales success. The more and better questions you ask aimed at finding a problem or uncovering a dissatisfaction, the more interest the prospect will have and the more sales you will make. The person who asks questions has control.

Good salespeople always plan the wording of their questions, rewriting them and practicing them before they get face-to-face with a prospect. Poor salespeople, on the other hand, make up their questions as they go along.

Here are some great questions for gap analysis.

The first question is an application of the "magic-want technique." Imagine that you have a magic wand that you can wave over the prospect's situation and you ask this question: "Mr. [or Ms.] Prospect, if this situation were absolutely perfect in every respect, what would it look like? Then remain completely silent. When the prospect begins to describe that perfect situation, you'll uncover the gaps you can fill to create his or her ideal future. When you explain how your product or service can bridge those gaps, you will greatly enhance your chances of making a sale.

A great set of questions begins with the words *What if?* For example, you can ask, "What if we could achieve this particular result for you; what effect would that have on your current operations?"

Good questions that grab the prospect's attention will start him or her visualizing and imagining an ideal future state, exactly the state that your product or service is meant to achieve.

A final key to effective selling through gap analysis is to share some of the experiences of people who have previously purchased your product or service. Use third-party references, testimonials, and anecdotes. Say something like, "I have a very good customer who had a similar situation to yours not long ago." Then go on

to explain how your customer was able to rectify that situation in a cost-effective way by accepting your recommendation.

To be truly persuasive in the selling process, use gap analysis. Instead of trying to overwhelm your prospects with reasons and rationales for doing what you want them to do, ask questions aimed at uncovering their current problems, needs, and dissatisfactions. Listen carefully to the answers they give you, and ask additional questions to help them expand on their situation. Take a few moments to feed their answers back to them, to show that you were really listening and that you really understand their needs. Then position yourself to influence and persuade your prospects by showing them how your product or service just happens to be the ideal way to solve their problem, satisfy their need, or achieve their goal.

When you take this low-pressure approach to getting people to do what you want them to do, they will buy from you with pleasure, and they will recommend you to their friends. They will feel they are being helped to improve their lives rather than being pressured into buying something that they may not want or need.

The wonderful thing about selling is that it is a learned skill. No matter what level of selling ability you possess today, by continued practice, you can become better and more persuasive. And the more effective you are at selling, the more successful you will be in every area of your life.

Gaining Visibility

By: Brian Tracy

Have you noticed that some workers receive more promotions and greater pay than do their colleagues do, even though they are apparently not as competent or as capable as their colleagues are? This doesn't seem fair. Why should some people get ahead when others who seem to be working far harder, and even longer hours, get passed over for promotion and the additional rewards that go with it?

The fact is that to be a great success, it is important not only to be good at what you do, but also to be perceived as being good at what you do. Human beings are creatures of perception. It is not what they see but what they think they see that determines how they think and act.

If your coworker is perceived as being more promotable than you are, for whatever reasons, then it is very likely that your coworker will get additional responsibilities and more money, even though you know that you could do a better job, if given the chance.

Fortunately, however, there are several things that you can do to increase your visibility and accelerate the speed at which you move ahead in your career.

The starting point to attain high visibility is to develop competence. Determine what parts of your job are most important to your boss and to your company, and then make the decision to become very good in those areas. You must be perceived as being very competent at what you do; your future depends on it. That perception alone will bring you to the attention of more people faster than you can imagine. The perception of excellent performance will open up opportunities for greater responsibilities, higher pay

and better positions. Becoming good at what you do should be the foundation of your strategy for gaining higher visibility and rapid advancement in your career.

Employers everywhere are looking for men and women of action, people who will get in there and get the job done right as soon as possible. When you develop a reputation for competence and capability, you quickly become visible to all the key people in your working environment.

Excellence at what you do is essential, but it's not enough. There are additional elements that go into the perception that others have of you. And one of the most important elements is your overall image, from head to toe. How you appear to others makes a real difference.

A recent survey of personnel executives found that the decision to hire or not to hire is made in the first 30 seconds. Many people believe that the decision to accept or reject a job candidate is actually made in the first four seconds. Many capable men and women are disqualified from job opportunities because they simply do not look the part.

There are many elements of your life over which you have no control and which you cannot choose. But your external dress and appearance are totally a matter of personal preference. Through their choice of clothes, their grooming and their overall appearance, individuals deliberately make a statement about the kind of people they are. The way you look on the outside is a representation of the way you see yourself on the inside. If you have a positive, professional self-image, you will take pains to make your external appearance consistent with it.

It's a good idea to dress the way the senior people in your company dress. Dress for the position two jobs above your own. Since people judge you largely by the way you look on the outside, be sure to look thoroughly professional. Consequently, the perception of the people who can help you in your career will be positive. They will open doors for you in ways that you cannot now imagine.

Another powerful way to increase your visibility is to join one or two professional associations connected with your business or field. Begin by attending meetings as a guest to carefully assess whether or not a professional association can be of value to you. Determine if the members are the kind of people you would like to know and are well-established in their careers. Then, if you have decided that becoming known to the key people in this association can advance your career, take out a membership and get involved.

Most people who join any club or association do little more than attend the regular meetings. For some reason, they are too busy to assist with the various things that need to get done. This is not for you. Your job is to pick a key committee and volunteer for service. Find out which committee seems to be the most active and the most influential in that organization, and then step up to the plate. Volunteer your time, expertise and energy, and get busy. Attend every meeting. Take careful notes. Ask for assignments, and complete them on time and in an excellent fashion.

In each case, you have an opportunity to perform for other key people in your profession in a non-threatening environment. You give them a chance to see what you can do and what kind of a person you are. You expand your range of valuable contacts in one of the most effective ways possible in America today. The people you get to

know on these committees can eventually be extremely helpful to you in your work and in your career.

Also, join a well-known charitable organization, such as the United Way, and become active by donating your services to its annual fund-raising programs. You may not be wealthy now, but you do have time, and your willingness to give of yourself will soon be noticed by people who are higher up. Many men and women with limited contacts and limited resources have risen to positions of great prominence as the result of getting to know the key community leaders who participate in charitable organizations and professional associations.

Some years ago, I joined a statewide chamber of commerce and volunteered to work on its Economic Education Committee. As usual, very few of the members contributed any time or effort to the committee, so there was always lots of work for those few people who were willing to put in the effort. Within one year, I was speaking at the annual convention for this association. The audience was composed of some of the most influential business executives in the entire state. In the following year, I was invited to give a key briefing to the governor and his aides at the state capitol. I became so well-known in the business community that within six months, I was offered a position to run a new company at triple my former salary. It all came from becoming active in the chamber of commerce and becoming known to the other members.

About three years later, I volunteered to work with the United Way and had a very similar experience. In fact, my whole business life was changed because of my involvement in helping that charitable organization in its annual fund-raising drive.

It's amazing how far and how fast you will go when you begin to give your time and energy to others on a volunteer basis. It's one of the fastest ways up the ladder of success in America.

There are many other things that you can do to increase your visibility—things that don't occur to most people. For example, a study of 105 chief executive officers concluded that there were two qualities that would put a person onto the fast track in his or her career. The first quality was the ability to set priorities, to separate the relevant from the irrelevant when facing the many tasks of the day. The second quality was a sense of urgency, the ability to get the job done fast.

Managers place very high value on a person who can set priorities and move quickly to get the job finished. Dependability in job completion is one of the most valued traits in the American work force. When your employer can hand you a job and then walk away and never worry about it again, you have moved yourself onto the fast track, and your subsequent promotion and pay are virtually guaranteed.

Another way to increase your visibility is to continually upgrade your work-related skills, and to make sure that your superiors know about it. Look for additional courses you can take to improve at your job, and discuss them with your boss. Ask him or her to pay for the courses, but make it clear that you're going to take them anyway.

A young woman who worked for me was able to double her salary in less than six months by aggressively learning the computer, bookkeeping and accounting skills she needed as our company grew. And she was worth every penny.

Ask your boss for book and audio program recommendations. Then follow up by reading and listening to them and asking for further recommendations. Bosses are very

impressed with people who are constantly striving to learn more in order to increase their value to their companies. Doing this regularly can really accelerate your career.

Finally, you'll be more visible if you develop a Positive Mental Attitude. People like to be around and to promote people they like. A consistent, persistent attitude of cheerfulness and optimism is quickly noticed by everybody. When you make an effort to cultivate an attitude of friendliness toward people, they, in return, will go to extraordinary efforts to open doors for you.

In summary, here are the five keys to increasing your visibility so that you can be more successful, faster in your career:

1. Become excellent at the important things that you have been hired to do. Excellence in your chosen occupation is the primary stepping-stone to higher positions and better pay.
2. Look, act and dress the part. Become knowledgeable about styles, colors and fabrics. Dress the way senior people in your company dress. Never take anything for granted. Remember that in the area of image, "casualness brings casualties."
3. Develop your contacts, both inside and outside the company. Always be looking for ways to give of your time and effort, as an investment, so that others will be willing to give of their time and effort to help you sometime in the future.

The most successful men and women in any community are those who are known by the greatest number of other successful people. Begin with your professional association or club, and join a local charity that you care about and that also has a prestigious board of directors.

4. Take additional courses to upgrade your skills, and make sure that everyone knows about it. Ask your boss for book and audio program recommendations. Then read and listen, and go back to your boss with your comments on what you've learned and to ask for further recommendations.

When your boss feels that you are eager to learn and grow, often he'll become a mentor to you and will help you up the ladder of success. This process of being mentored, or guided, has been instrumental to the careers of many successful executives in America.

5. Be positive, cheerful and helpful. Be the kind of person other people want to see get ahead. Treat other people with friendliness and patience, and always have a good word to say to the people you work with.

In the final analysis, taking the time to become an excellent human being will do more to raise your visibility and improve your chances for promotion than will any other single thing that you can do. And you can do it if you really want to.

Generating Energy

By: Brian Tracy

You may have a thousand different goals over the course of your lifetime, but they all will fall into one of four basic categories. Everything you do is an attempt to enhance the quality of your life in one or more of these areas.

The first category is your desire for happy relationships. You want to love and be loved by others. You want to have a happy, harmonious home life. You want to get along well with the people around you, and you want to earn the respect of the people you respect. Your involvement in social and community affairs results from your desire to have happy interactions with others and to make a contribution to the society you live in.

The second category is your desire for interesting and challenging work. You want to make a good living, of course, but more than that, you want to really enjoy your occupation or profession. The very best times of your life are when you are completely absorbed in your work.

The third category is your desire for financial independence. You want to be free from worries about money. You want to have enough money in the bank so that you can make decisions without counting your pennies. You want to achieve a certain financial state so that you can retire in comfort and never have to be concerned about whether or not you have enough money to support your lifestyle. Financial independence frees you from poverty and a need to depend upon others for your livelihood. If you save and invest regularly throughout your working life, you will eventually reach the point where you will never have to work again.

The fourth category is your desire for good health, to be free of pain and illness and to have a continuous flow of energy and feelings of well-being. In fact, your health is so central to your life that you take it for granted until something happens to disrupt it.

The common denominator of these four goals, and the essential requirement for achieving each of them, is a high level of energy. The achievement of even a small amount of success in any one of these areas requires the development and expenditure of energy. Energy is a critical fuel and the one ingredient without which no other accomplishment is possible.

The aim of strategic planning for corporations is to find ways to organize the business to increase ROE, return on equity. ROE refers to the return on the capital invested in the enterprise. By shifting resources from areas of lower value to areas of higher potential value, the ROE in the business can be increased. In personal strategic planning, the aim is similar. It is also to increase ROE, but in this case, ROE stands for return on energy. All the work on personal development, self-improvement, goal setting, and time management is aimed at helping you to increase your return on energy, or as my friend Ken Blanchard calls it, "your return on life." You are continually organizing and reorganizing your time and your resources so that you can get the very most pleasure, satisfaction, and rewards from the time and energy you put into your activities on a day-to-day basis.

Whereas companies have financial capital, you have human capital. Your human capital is composed of mental, emotional, and physical energy. The more energy you have to invest, and the more intelligently you invest it, the greater will be your rewards.

It is not the amount of time that you spend at your work or on your relationships that matters. Rather, it is the amount of yourself that you put into the time. If you have gone to bed late, gotten up early, and gone to work tired, you may be physically present for eight hours, but the quality and quantity of work that you can

accomplish during that period of time is compromised. You'll achieve only a small percentage of your potential productivity compared with what you can accomplish when you are fully rested and filled with enthusiasm.

In every area of your life, it is the quality of the time that you put into your activities that determines the rewards and satisfaction that you receive from them; this depends upon your energy level.

Building and sustaining your energy level is imperative. Since your energy is central to everything you accomplish, you should be very sensitive to things that either build or deplete it. Here are six keys to building and maintaining a high level of energy and vitality:

1. Proper weight. Carrying extra weight on your body is like carrying a pack loaded with bricks on your back — uphill. Excess weight tires you out. It taxes your heart, your lungs, and your muscles. Extra weight forces your body to burn up more energy than it normally would just to maintain life and proper functioning.

On the other hand, losing weight will increase your energy level almost immediately. Your self-esteem will go up. You will feel healthier and happier. As you lose weight, you will feel a greater sense of power and personal control. When you reach your ideal weight, you will be more effective in everything else you do.

2. Proper diet. The foods you eat have a tremendous impact on your energy level throughout the day. Changes in your diet can make you feel fresher, more alive, more alert, and filled with greater vitality than you can imagine.

The way to live to a ripe, happy, healthy old age is to shift the proportions of food you eat so you are consuming more fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain products. When you get used to eating highly nutritious foods, you'll be less willing to eat foods that are not particularly good for you.

3. Proper exercise. The more regularly you exercise, the more energy you have, the better you feel, and the longer you will live. Regular exercise enhances your digestion, reduces the number of hours that you need to sleep, and increases your vitality in the physical, mental, and emotional realms.

There are three basic types of exercise: flexibility, strength, and endurance.

Flexibility exercises, such as yoga, require gentle stretching of all your muscles and the articulation of each of your joints each day. The more you stretch your muscles on a regular basis, the more relaxed, coordinated, and looser you will feel.

Strength exercises include calisthenics, weight lifting, and other exercises that build your muscles.

But perhaps the most important are endurance, or aerobic, exercises. One of the keys to long life and good health is aerobic exercise at least three times per week for a minimum of 30 minutes per time. You can achieve aerobic fitness by walking, running, swimming, cycling, rowing, or cross-country

skiing. The important thing is that you exercise at least three times per week — and many people say five times per week — for the rest of your life. This will affect your levels of health and energy in everything else you do. Everything counts.

4. Proper rest and recreation. On average, you need seven to eight hours of good, solid sleep each night. Some people can get by on less. But you should plan and organize your evenings so that you are “early to bed and early to rise.” Remember, nature demands balance in all things. If you are going to work hard during the day, you must take time off to rest and recuperate in the evenings and on the weekends. The more balance you have between work and recreation, the more energy you will have and the more productive you will be.
5. Proper breathing. By breathing, I mean deep diaphragmatic breathing, where you fill your lungs to the count of 10, hold to the count of 10, and then exhale to the count of 10. If you do this seven to 10 times, two or three times per day, you will be amazed at how much fresher and more relaxed you feel.
6. Proper attitude. Positive Mental Attitude seems to go hand in hand with great achievement and success in every walk of life. The more positive you are, the more energy you have. The more positive you are, the happier you are. The more positive you are, the more positive are the people and situations you attract into your life. The more positive you are, the easier it seems for you to get the cooperation of other people. The more positive you are, the more effectively you perform.

On the other hand, negative emotions drain your energy, enthusiasm, and vitality. They tire you out and depress your immune system. Bouts of fear, anger, doubt, resentment, or guilt will be manifested in your physical body.

Keep your energy level high by always looking for the good in every person, in every situation. Seek the valuable lesson in every setback or adversity. Look for the equal or greater benefit that comes out of every disappointment. Be a perennial optimist. Be cheerful and positive. Be helpful and supportive. Be a source of encouragement and inspiration. Be the kind of person everybody looks forward to seeing and talking to.

Every success is the result of hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of tiny efforts that nobody may ever see or appreciate. These tiny efforts, sacrifices, and disciplines accumulate to make you an extraordinary person.

Everything that you do counts in some way. Nothing is neutral. Everything either helps you or hurts you. Everything either adds up or takes away. Everything either propels you toward your goal or moves you away from it. Everything counts.

With regard to your levels of health and energy, everything that you do, or don't do, will have an impact on how you feel and how you perform. And the results of all these activities are cumulative. People who are healthy and energetic in their 50s and 60s were engaging in positive health habits in their 20s and 30s. People who live a long, healthy, happy life into their 80s are

people who began planning for it and disciplining themselves in their 30s and 40s. Everything counts.

Leading and Motivating

By: Brian Tracy

It's been said that "Leadership is not what you do, but who you are." This, however, is only partially true. Leadership is very much who you are, but it cannot be divorced from what you do. Who you are represents the inner person, and what you do represents the outer person. Each is dependent on the other for maximum effectiveness.

The starting point of motivational leadership is to begin seeing yourself as a role model, seeing yourself as an example to others. See yourself as a person who sets the standards that others follow. A key characteristic of leaders is that they set high standards of accountability for themselves and for their behaviors. They assume that others are watching them and then setting their own standards by what they do. They, in fact, lead by example, just exactly as though someone were following them around, surreptitiously taking notes and photographs of their daily actions for others to see and act on.

Motivational leadership is based on the Law of Indirect Effort. According to this law, most things in human life are achieved more easily by indirect means than they are by direct means. You more easily become a leader to others by demonstrating that you have the qualities of leadership than you do by ordering others to follow your directions. Instead of trying to get people to emulate you, you concentrate on living a life that is so admirable that others want to be like you without your saying a word.

In business, there are several kinds of power. Two of these are ascribed power and position power.

Position power is the power that comes with a job title or position in any organization. If you become a manager in a company, you automatically have certain powers and privileges that go along with your rank. You can order people about and make certain decisions. You can be a leader whether or not anyone likes you.

Ascribed power is the power you gain because of the kind of person you are. In every organization, there are people who are inordinately influential and looked up to by others, even though their positions may not be high up on the organizational chart. These are the men and women who are genuine leaders because of the quality of the people they have become, because of their characters and their personalities.

Perhaps the most powerful of motivational leaders is the person who practices what is called "servant leadership." Confucius said, "He who would be master must be servant of all." The person who sees himself or herself as a servant, and who does everything possible to help others to perform at their best, is practicing the highest form of servant leadership.

Over the years, we have been led to believe that leaders are those who stride boldly about, exude power and confidence, give orders and make decisions for others to carry out. However, that is old school. The leader of today is the one who asks questions, listens carefully, plans diligently and then builds consensus among all those who are

necessary for achieving the goals. The leader does not try to do it by himself or herself. The leader gets things done by helping others to do them.

This brings us to five of the qualities of motivational leaders. These are qualities that you already have to a certain degree and that you can develop further to stand out from the people around you in a very short period of time.

The first quality is *vision*. This is the one single quality that, more than anything, separates leaders from followers. Leaders have vision. Followers do not. Leaders have the ability to stand back and see the big picture. Followers are caught up in day-to-day activities. Leaders have developed the ability to fix their eyes on the horizon and see greater possibilities. Followers are those whose eyes are fixed on the ground in front of them and who are so busy that they seldom look at themselves and their activities in a larger context.

George Bernard Shaw summarized this quality of leaders; in the words of one of his characters: "Most men look at what is and ask, 'Why?' I instead look at what could be and ask, 'Why not?'"

The best way for you to motivate others is to be motivated yourself. The fastest way to get others excited about a project is to get excited yourself. The way to get others committed to achieving a goal or a result is to be totally committed yourself. The way to build loyalty to your organization, and to other people, is to be an example of loyalty in everything you say and do. These all are applications of the Law of Indirect Effort. They very neatly tie in to the quality of vision.

One requirement of leadership is the ability to choose an area of excellence. Just as a good general chooses the terrain on which to do battle, an excellent leader chooses the area in which he and others are going to do an outstanding job. The commitment to excellence is one of the most powerful of all motivators. All leaders who change people and organizations are enthusiastic about achieving excellence in a particular area.

The most motivational vision you can have for yourself and others is to "Be the best!" Many people don't yet realize that excellent performance in serving other people is an absolute, basic essential for survival in the economy of the future. Many individuals and companies still adhere to the idea that as long as they are no worse than anyone else, they can remain in business. That is just plain silly! It is prehistoric thinking. We are now in the age of excellence. Customers assume that they will get excellent quality, and if they don't, they will go to your competitors so fast, people's heads will spin.

As a leader, your job is to be excellent at what you do, to be the best in your chosen field of endeavor. Your job is to have a vision of high standards in serving people. You not only exemplify excellence in your own behavior, but you also translate it to others so that they, too, become committed to this vision.

This is the key to servant leadership. It is the commitment to doing work of the highest quality in the service of other people, both inside and outside the organization. Leadership today requires an equal focus on the people who must do the job, on the one hand, and the people who are expected to benefit from the job, on the other.

The second quality, which is perhaps the single most respected quality of leaders, is *integrity*. Integrity is complete, unflinching honesty with regard to everything that you

say and do. Integrity underlies all the other qualities. Your measure of integrity is determined by how honest you are in the critical areas of your life.

Integrity means this: When someone asks you at the end of the day, "Did you do your very best?" you can look him in the eye and say, "Yes!" Integrity means this: When someone asks you if you could have done it better, you can honestly say, "No, I did everything I possibly could."

Integrity means that you, as a leader, admit your shortcomings. It means that you work to develop your strengths and compensate for your weaknesses. Integrity means that you tell the truth, and that you live the truth in everything that you do and in all your relationships. Integrity means that you deal straightforwardly with people and situations and that you do not compromise what you believe to be true.

If the first two qualities of motivational leadership are vision and integrity, the third quality is the one that backs them both up. It is *courage*. It is the chief distinguishing characteristic of the true leader. It is almost always visible in the leader's words and actions. It is absolutely indispensable to success, happiness and the ability to motivate other people to be the best they can be.

In a way, it is easy to develop a big vision for yourself and for the person you want to be. It is easy to commit yourself to living with complete integrity. But it requires incredible courage to follow through on your vision and on your commitments. You see, as soon as you set a high goal or standard for yourself, you will run into all kinds of difficulties and setbacks. You will be surrounded by temptations to compromise your values and your vision. You will feel an almost irresistible urge to "get along by going along." Your desire to earn the respect and cooperation of others can easily lead to the abandonment of your principles, and here is where courage comes in.

Courage combined with integrity is the foundation of character. The first form of courage is your ability to stick to your principles, to stand for what you believe in and to refuse to budge unless you feel right about the alternative. Courage is also the ability to step out in faith, to launch out into the unknown and then to face the inevitable doubt and uncertainty that accompany every new venture.

Most people are seduced by the lure of the comfort zone. This can be likened to going out of a warm house on a cold, windy morning. The average person, when he feels the storm swirling outside his comfort zone, rushes back inside where it's nice and warm. But not the true leader. The true leader has the courage to step away from the familiar and comfortable and to face the unknown with no guarantees of success. It is this ability to "boldly go where no man has gone before" that distinguishes you as a leader from the average person. This is the example that you must set if you are to rise above the average. It is this example that inspires and motivates other people to rise above their previous levels of accomplishment as well.

Alexander the Great, the king of Macedonia, was one of the most superb leaders of all time. He became king at the age of 19, when his father, Philip II, was assassinated. In the next 11 years, he conquered much of the known world, leading his armies against numerically superior forces.

Yet, when he was at the height of his power, the master of the known world, the greatest ruler in history to that date, he would still draw his sword at the beginning of a battle and lead his men forward into the conflict. He insisted on leading by example.

Alexander felt that he could not ask his men to risk their lives unless he was willing to demonstrate by his actions that he had complete confidence in the outcome. The sight of Alexander charging forward so excited and motivated his soldiers that no force on earth could stand before them.

The fourth quality of motivational leadership is *realism*. Realism is a form of intellectual honesty. The realist insists upon seeing the world as it really is, not as he wishes it were. This objectivity, this refusal to engage in self-delusion, is a mark of the true leader.

Those who exhibit the quality of realism do not trust to luck, hope for miracles, pray for exceptions to basic business principles, expect rewards without working or hope that problems will go away by themselves. These all are examples of self-delusion, of living in a fantasyland.

The motivational leader insists on seeing things exactly as they are and encourages others to look at life the same way. As a motivational leader, you get the facts, whatever they are. You deal with people honestly and tell them exactly what you perceive to be the truth. This doesn't mean that you will always be right, but you will always be expressing the truth in the best way you know how.

The fifth quality of motivational leadership is *responsibility*. This is perhaps the hardest of all to develop. The acceptance of responsibility means that, as Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here."

The game of life is very competitive. Sometimes, great success and great failure are separated by a very small distance. In watching the play-offs in basketball, baseball and football, we see that the winner can be decided by a single point, and that single point can rest on a single action, or inaction, on the part of a single team member at a critical part of the game.

Life is very much like competitive sports. Very small things that you do, or don't do, can either give you the edge that leads to victory or take away your edge at the critical moment. This principle is especially true with regard to accepting responsibility for yourself and for everything that happens to you.

The opposite of accepting responsibility is making excuses, blaming others and becoming upset, angry and resentful toward people for what they have done to you or not done for you.

Any one of these three behaviors can trip you up and be enough to cost you the game:

If you run into an obstacle or setback and you make excuses rather than accept responsibility, it's a five-yard penalty. It can cost you a first down. It can cost you a touchdown. It can make the difference between success and failure.

If, when you face a problem or setback, and you both make excuses and blame someone else, you get a 10-yard penalty. In a tightly contested game, where the teams are just about even, a 10-yard penalty can cost you the game.

If, instead of accepting responsibility when things go wrong, you make excuses, blame someone else and simultaneously become angry and resentful and blow up, you

get a 15-yard penalty. This may cost you the championship and your career as well if it continues.

Personal leadership and motivational leadership are very much the same. To lead others, you must first lead yourself. To be an example or a role model for others, you must first become an excellent person yourself.

You motivate yourself with a big vision, and as you move progressively toward its realization, you motivate and enthuse others to work with you to fulfill that vision.

You exhibit absolute honesty and integrity with everyone in everything you do. You are the kind of person others admire and respect and want to be like. You set a standard that others aspire to. You live in truth with yourself and others so that they feel confident giving you their support and their commitment.

You demonstrate courage in everything you do by facing doubts and uncertainties and moving forward regardless. You put up a good front even when you feel anxious about the outcome. You don't burden others with your fears and misgivings. You keep them to yourself. You constantly push yourself out of your comfort zone and in the direction of your goals. And no matter how bleak the situation might appear, you keep on keeping on with a smile.

You are intensely realistic. You refuse to engage in mental games or self-delusion. You encourage others to be realistic and objective about their situations as well. You encourage them to realize and appreciate that there is a price to pay for everything they want. They have weaknesses that they will have to overcome, and they have standards that they will have to meet, if they want to survive and thrive in a competitive market.

You accept complete responsibility for results. You refuse to make excuses or blame others or hold grudges against people who you feel may have wronged you. You say, "If it's to be, it's up to me." You repeat over and over the words, "I am responsible. I am responsible. I am responsible."

Finally, you take action. You know that all mental preparation and character building is merely a prelude to action. It's not what you say but what you do that counts.

The mark of the true leader is that he or she leads the action. He or she is willing to go first. He or she sets the example and acts as the role model. He or she does what he or she expects others to do.

You become a motivational leader by motivating yourself. And you motivate yourself by striving toward excellence, by committing yourself to becoming everything you are capable of becoming. You motivate yourself by throwing your whole heart into doing your job in an excellent fashion. You motivate yourself and others by continually looking for ways to help others to improve their lives and achieve their goals. You become a motivational leader by becoming the kind of person others want to get behind and support in every way.

Your main job is to take complete control of your personal evolution and become a leader in every area of your life. You could ask for nothing more, and you should settle for nothing less.

Make Every Minute Count

Save Hundreds Of Hours And Save Thousands Of Dollars In Personal Advancement

Your mind is your most precious asset. You must be continually working to increase the quality of your thinking. One of the best ways is to turn driving time into learning time. Listen to educational audio cassettes in your car. The average driver according to the American Automobile Association, drives 12,000 to 25,000 miles each year, spending 500 to 1000 hours that you spend each year in your car. That is the equivalent of 12 1/2 to 25 forty-hour weeks. This is the same as two full university semesters spent behind the wheel of your car each year.

Use Traveling Time As Learning Time

If you did nothing but use that traveling time as learning time, this decision alone could make you one of the best educated people of your generation. Many people have gone from rags to riches simply by listening to audio programs as they drive to and from work.

Attend Every Seminar

In addition, for personal and professional development, you should attend every seminar you can. You can often save yourself 100's of hours of reading and researching by attending a seminar given by an authority in his or her field. You can learn ideas, techniques and methods that can save you hours, days, even months of hard work and research on your own.

Increase Your Income

Remember, to earn more, you must learn more. Your outer world of results will always correspond to your inner world of preparation. I've always loved the poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow where he describes those who achieve great things with their lives:

"Those heights by great men reached and kept
were not obtained by sudden flight,
but they, while their companions slept
were toiling upward in the night"

Remember, continuous learning is the minimum requirement for success in any field.

Now, here are two things you can do to put these ideas to work in your life immediately.

First, purchase an audio program that can help you to be happier and more effective today. Begin listening to it immediately. Resolve never to listen to music in your car when you can turn driving time into learning time.

Second, seek out seminars and training programs given by experts in your field. Sit close to the front, take careful notes, and apply the best ideas that you learn immediately.

Making the Most of Change

By: Brian Tracy

To deal with change, perhaps the most valuable quality you can develop is flexibility. Form the habit of remaining open-minded and adaptable to new information and circumstances. When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, instead of becoming upset or frustrated, practice looking into the change or reversal for the opportunity or benefit it might contain.

Superior men and women are invariably those who remain calm and keep their wits about them in the midst of unexpected turbulence. They take a deep breath, they relax, and they assess the situation objectively. They keep themselves calm and unemotional by asking questions and seeking information when things don't work out as they expected. For example, if someone doesn't fulfill a commitment, or if a sale is canceled, or fails to go through, they keep their minds clear and steady by asking questions, such as "What exactly happened in this situation?" They deal with change by focusing on getting the facts before reacting. They develop the ability to cut through the confusion and ask questions such as "Why did this happen? How did it happen? How serious is it? Now that it has happened, what are the various things we can do?"

Robert Fritz, in his book *The Path of Least Resistance*, makes a clear distinction between effective people and ineffective people. He says that ineffective people have a tendency to be in a reactive-responsive mode of behavior much of the time. Instead of consciously and deliberately choosing their courses of action, they react to what is going on around them, and they respond to their emotions, sometimes blowing up and sometimes becoming depressed. They ride an emotional roller coaster. And the very best they can hope for, in this mode of behavior, is to get back to even, where they were before they became upset.

The superior person, according to Robert Fritz, concentrates his attention on his "future vision." Whenever an unexpected change or setback occurs, the superior person immediately focuses his mind on where he wants to be at a future time. This future vision is something that he has planned and given a lot of thought to, so it is fairly easy to conjure up at a moment's notice.

Since your conscious mind can hold only one thought at a time, when you deliberately insist upon thinking about your goal or your future vision, your mind immediately becomes calm and positive, and you feel in control. Superior people always choose the future over the past. They always ask, "What do we do now?" rather than lose time and energy by looking around for someone to blame or criticize. They keep themselves performing at their best by thinking and talking about a desired future state.

There is a little poem, "Two men looked out through prison bars./ One saw the mud; the other saw the stars." You can greatly improve your ability to deal with change by focusing your attention on the future, and by seeing the glass as half-full rather than half-empty.

The critical issue in dealing with change is the subject of control. Most of your stress and unhappiness comes as a result of feeling out of control in a particular area of your life. If you think about the times or places where you feel the very best about yourself, you will notice that you have a high degree of control in those places. One of the reasons why you like to get home after a trip is that, after you walk through your front

door, you feel completely in control of your environment. You know where everything is. You don't have to answer to anyone. You can relax completely. You are back in control.

Psychologists call this the difference between an internal locus of control and an external locus of control. Your locus of control is where you feel the control is located for a particular part of your life. A person with an external locus of control feels that he is controlled by forces outside of himself. Most people feel that they are controlled by their boss, or their bills, or their relationships, or their childhood experiences, or their external environment. When a person has an external locus of control, he or she feels a high degree of stress. And with an external locus of control, a person is very tense and uneasy about change of any kind. Change represents a threat that may leave the individual worse off than before.

On the other hand, the person with an internal locus of control enjoys a high degree of self-determination. He feels that he is very much in charge of his life. He plans his work and works his plan. He accepts a high degree of responsibility, and he believes that everything that happens, happens for a reason, and that he is the primary creative force in his life.

Since the only thing over which you have complete control is the content of your conscious mind, your ability to deal with change begins with your taking full, complete control over the things you think. As Thomas Huxley said, "Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you." Since change is inevitable and continuous, it is how you think about what is happening to you that is most important in determining how change affects you, and whether you use it to your advantage or let it work to your disadvantage.

In his book *Celebrations of Life*, Rene Dubos says that we fear change more today than ever before, and for less reason. The reason you fear change is because you are afraid that you will be worse off as a result. No one fears change that implies improvement. For example, if you learned that you were going to have to change your life-style because you had just won a lottery, this is not the kind of change that you would avoid or anticipate with dread. It is change that implies unpleasant surprises that you fear and become anxious about because it causes you to feel that you have lost a certain amount of control in that part of your life.

Your aim is to become a "change master," to embrace change, to welcome change, and to ride the tides of change. You do this by taking control of the direction of change in your life and assuring that it is predominately positive and toward improvements you desire.

Boat builders know that the deeper the keel of a sailing vessel, the more stable it will be in storms, squalls and gusts of wind. The same holds true for you. The deeper your keel, or the stabilizing factors in your life, the less likely it is that you will be blown over, or off course, when unexpected change occurs.

You can deepen your keel and increase your stability by setting big goals for yourself and making clear, written plans for their accomplishment. Goals enable you to control the direction of change. With goals, change becomes planned and deliberate, instead of random and haphazard. Goals assure that the changes that take place in your life are primarily self-determined and self-directed. With clear, specific goals, the changes that take place will tend to be positive and move you toward something that you want to achieve, rather than blow you off course.

For example, if you are in business or in sales, you will experience a continuous series of large and small disappointments and setbacks. That is the nature of the game. They are inevitable and unavoidable. Some things work out, and some things don't. Sometimes you win; sometimes you lose. In spite of your best efforts, unexpected and unpredictable events will derail your best-laid plans. This endless process of change and setbacks begins when you first enter into the world of work, and it continues for the rest of your life. Problems, changes are like the rain—they just happen.

But if you set clear goals for your work, for your family life and for your personal development, then no matter what happens, you can concentrate your thinking on your goals and take a long-term view of your current circumstances. You can, in effect, rise above the challenges of the moment, and keep your eyes on the guiding stars of your life and your most cherished dreams.

If you are in sales, and you are working toward a series of sales goals, you will be developing a wide range of prospective customers. You will be working simultaneously on customers who are both short-term and medium-term, as well as large and small prospects. Meanwhile, you will be working on yourself, to become better and more knowledgeable in your field. You will have plans and engage in activities with the important people in your life. With clear goals, you will be multidimensional rather than one-dimensional. A setback or disappointment in any one part of your life will be quickly offset by the fact that you are busy in many other areas, and you simply won't allow yourself to invest too much emotional energy in one particular thing that doesn't work out to plan.

With a clear idea of where you're going and what you want to accomplish, you develop resilience, which is the ability to bounce back rather than to break. You develop what is called the "hardy personality" and become the type of person who is resistant to the negative emotions that affect people who have no goals or direction.

The first step in dealing with any change is simply to accept the change as a reality. Acceptance is the opposite of rejection or resistance. Acceptance keeps your mind calm and positive. As William James said, "The starting point in dealing with any difficulty is to be willing to have it so." The minute you accept that a change has occurred, and that you can't cry over spilled milk, you become more capable of dealing with the change and turning it to your advantage.

One of the best ways to deal with the worry that is often generated by unexpected changes is to sit down and answer, on paper, the question: "What exactly am I worrying about?"

In medicine, it is said that accurate diagnosis is half the cure. When you sit down and define a worry situation clearly on paper, it suddenly becomes less stressful to you, and it will often resolve itself. In any case, when it is clearly defined, you have diagnosed it, and you can now do something about it.

The second step is to ask yourself, "What is the worst possible thing that can happen in this worry situation?" Much worry and stress comes from the refusal to face what might happen as a result of your difficulty or problem. When you clearly define the worst possible outcome, and write it down next to the definition of the problem, you will find that, whatever it is, you can handle it. Often your worries will begin to evaporate as soon as you have clearly determined the worst that might happen as a result.

Now decide to accept the worst possible outcome should it occur. Mentally resolve that, even if the worst possible consequences ensue from this situation, it will not be the end of the world for you. You will accept it and carry on. In fact, it could probably be a lot worse. The very act of accepting the worst possible outcome completes the cycle of eliminating from your mind the stress and anxiety associated with the situation.

You are now ready for the third step in dealing with change, and that is to adjust your behaviors and actions to the new situation. Ask yourself, "What are all the things I can do to make sure that the worst possible outcome does not occur?" Sometimes we call this "damage control." In the business schools, this is an important part of decision making, and it is called the "mini-max regret solution." What can you do to minimize the maximum damage that can occur from an unexpected change or setback? As you begin thinking of all the things you can do, you are adjusting your mind to the new information and preparing to take steps to deal with the change effectively.

The final part of this four-step method for dealing with change is to improve on the existing situation. Often, a change signals that your plans are incomplete or that you might be heading in the wrong direction. Serious changes, which seemingly create real problems, are often signals that you are on the wrong track. There is an old saying, "Crisis is change trying to take place." If, instead of resisting change, like a pine tree that snaps in a strong wind, you bend with change, like a willow tree, you will often find that the change is a healthy and positive step toward achieving your goals.

W. Clement Stone, the founder of Combined Insurance Company of America, is famous for his attitude of being an "inverse paranoid." He is convinced that everything that happens is part of a conspiracy to help him to be more successful. Whenever something unexpected occurs, he immediately says, "That's good!" and then looks into the situation to find out exactly what is good about it.

If you look into any change, you will always find something good and beneficial for you in the change. Look for the valuable lesson contained within every setback. What is the hidden advantage that you can turn to your benefit? Is this change a signal that, if properly responded to, will save you a much bigger change or problem in the future? Since your mind can hold only one thought at a time, as I mentioned, if you force yourself to look for the positive aspect of any change, you'll keep your mind clear, and you'll keep your attitude optimistic and confident.

Viktor Frankl said that the last great freedom of man is the freedom to choose his attitude under any given set of circumstances. You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.

The mark of a superior person is what is called "tolerance for ambiguity." This simply means that you have the capacity to deal effectively in a rapidly changing situation. The higher up you go—the greater your income and responsibilities, the higher your status and position—the faster the rate of change will be around you. At every stage, it will be your ability to function with calmness, clarity and quiet assurance that will mark you as the kind of person who is going places in life. In the final analysis, your ability to perform effectively in a world of ongoing change is the true measure of how well-developed a person you really are. And the keys are to accept change, to adjust to change, to improve upon change, and then to move on to the next situation. As you

continue to do this, you will have such a wonderful feeling of self-control and self-determination that your whole life will be bright and positive, and so will your results.

Managing Your Time

By: Brian Tracy

Perhaps the greatest single problem that people have today is “time poverty.” Working people have too much to do and too little time for their personal lives. Most people feel overwhelmed with responsibilities and activities, and the harder they work, the further behind they feel. This sense of being on a never-ending treadmill can cause you to fall into the reactive/responsive mode of living. Instead of clearly deciding what you want to do, you continually react to what is happening around you. Pretty soon you lose all sense of control. You feel that your life is running you, rather than you running your life.

On a regular basis, you have to stand back and take stock of yourself and what you’re doing. You have to stop the clock and do some serious thinking about who you are and where you are going. You have to evaluate your activities in the light of what is really important to you. You must master your time rather than becoming a slave to the constant flow of events and demands on your time. And you must organize your life to achieve balance, harmony, and inner peace.

Taking action without thinking is the cause of every failure. Your ability to think is the most valuable trait that you possess. If you improve the quality of your thinking, you improve the quality of your life—sometimes immediately.

Time is your most precious resource. It is the most valuable thing you have. It is perishable, it is irreplaceable, and it cannot be saved. It can only be reallocated from activities of lower value to activities of higher value. All work requires time. And time is absolutely essential for the important relationships in your life. The very act of taking a moment to think about your time before you spend it will begin to improve your personal time management immediately.

I used to think that time management was only a business tool, like a calculator or a cellular telephone. It was something that you used so that you could get more done in a shorter period of time and eventually be paid more money. Then I learned that time management is not a peripheral activity or skill. It is the core skill upon which everything else in life depends.

In your work or business life, there are so many demands on your time from other people that very little of your time is yours to use as you choose. However, at home and in your personal life you can exert a tremendous amount of control over how you use your time. And it is in this area that I want to focus.

Personal time management begins with you. It begins with your thinking through what is really important to you in life. And it only makes sense if you organize it around specific things that you want to accomplish. You need to set goals in three major areas of your life. First, you need family and personal goals. These are the reasons why you get up in the morning, why you work hard and upgrade your skills, why you worry about money and sometimes feel frustrated by the demands on your time.

What are your personal and family goals, both tangible and intangible? A tangible family goal could be a bigger house, a better car, a larger television set, a vacation, or anything else that costs money. An intangible goal would be to build a higher quality relationship with your spouse and children, to spend more time with your family going for walks or reading books. Achieving these family and personal goals are the real essence of time management, and its major purpose.

The second area of goals are your business and career goals. These are the “how” goals, the means by which you achieve your personal, “why” goals. How can you achieve the level of income that will enable you to fulfill your family goals? How can you develop the skills and abilities to stay ahead of the curve in your career? Business and career goals are absolutely essential, especially when balanced with family and personal goals.

The third type of goals are your personal development goals. Remember, you can’t achieve much more on the outside than what you have achieved on the inside. Your outer life will be a reflection of your inner life. If you wish to achieve worthwhile things in your personal and your career life, you must become a worthwhile person in your own self-development. You must build yourself if you want to build your life. Perhaps the greatest secret of success is that you can become anything you really want to become to achieve any goal that you really want to achieve. But in order to do it, you must go to work on yourself and never stop.

Once you have a list of your personal and family goals, your business and career goals, and your self-development goals, you can then organize the list by priority. This brings us to the difference between priorities and posteriorities. In order to get your personal time under control, you must decide very clearly upon your priorities. You must decide on the most important things that you could possibly be doing to give yourself the same amount of happiness, satisfaction, and joy in life. But at the same time, you must establish posteriorities as well. Just as priorities are things that you do more of and sooner, posteriorities are things that you do less of and later.

The fact is, your calendar is full. You have no spare time. Your time is extremely valuable. Therefore, for you to do anything new, you will have to stop doing something old. In order to get into something, you will have to get out of something else. In order to pick something up, you will have to put something down. Before you make any new commitment of your time, you must firmly decide what activities you are going to discontinue in your personal life.

If you want to spend more time with your family, for example, you must decide what activities you currently engage in that are preventing you from doing so.

A principle of time management says that *hard* time pushes out *soft* time. This means that hard time, such as working, will push out soft time, such as the time you spend with your family. If you don’t get your work done at the office because you don’t use your time well, you almost invariably have to rob that time from your family. As a result, because your family is important to you, you find yourself in a values conflict. You feel stressed and irritable. You feel a tremendous amount of pressure. You know in your heart that you should be spending more time with the important people in your life, but because you didn’t get your work done, you have to fulfill those responsibilities before you can spend time with your spouse and children.

Think of it this way. Every minute you waste during the waking day is time that your family will ultimately be deprived of. So concentrate on working when you are at work so that you can concentrate on your family when you are at home.

There are three key questions that you can ask yourself continually to keep your personal life in balance. The first question is, "What is really important to me?" Whenever you find yourself with too much to do and too little time, stop and ask yourself, "What is it that is really important for me to do in this situation?" Then, make sure that what you are doing is the answer to that question.

The second question is, "What are my highest value activities?" In your personal life, this means, "What are the things that I do that give me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction? Of all the things that I could be doing at any one time, what are the things that I could do to add the greatest value to my life?"

And the final question for you to ask over and over again is, "What is the most valuable use of my time right now?" Since you can only do one thing at a time, you must constantly organize your life so that you are doing one thing, the most important thing, at every moment.

Personal time management enables you to choose what to do first, what to do second, and what not to do at all. It enables you to organize every aspect of your life so that you can get the greatest joy, happiness, and satisfaction out of everything you do.

Setting Priorities

By: Brian Tracy

In 1970, sociologist Dr. Edward Banfield of Harvard University wrote a book entitled *The Unheavenly City*. He described one of the most profound studies on success and priority setting ever conducted.

Banfield's goal was to find out how and why some people became financially independent during the course of their working lifetimes. He started off convinced that the answer to this question would be found in factors such as family background, education, intelligence, influential contacts, or some other concrete factor. What he finally discovered was that the major reason for success in life was a particular attitude of mind.

Banfield called this attitude "long time perspective." He said that men and women who were the most successful in life and the most likely to move up economically were those who took the future into consideration with every decision they made in the present. He found that the longer the period of time a person took into consideration while planning and acting, the more likely it was that he would achieve greatly during his career.

For example, one of the reasons your family doctor is among the most respected people in America is because he or she invested many years of hard work and study to finally earn the right to practice medicine. After university courses, internship, residency and practical training, a doctor may be more than 30 years old before he or she is capable of earning a good living. But from that point onward, these men

and women are some of the most respected and most successful professional people in the United States. They had long time perspectives.

The essential key to success in setting priorities is having a long time perspective. You can tell how important something is today by measuring its potential future impact on your life.

For example, if you come home from work at night and choose to play with your children or spend time with your spouse, rather than watch TV or read the paper, you have a long time perspective. You know that investing time in the health and happiness of your children and your spouse is a very valuable, high-priority use of time.

If you take additional courses in the evening to upgrade your skills and make yourself more valuable to your employer, you're acting with a long time perspective. Learning something practical and useful can have a long-term effect on your career.

The key word, then, to keep in mind when you're setting priorities is *sacrifice*. Setting priorities usually requires sacrificing present enjoyment for future enjoyment. It requires giving up a short-term pleasure in the present in order to enjoy a far greater and more substantial pleasure in the future.

Economists say that the inability to delay gratification—that is, the natural tendency of individuals to spend everything they earn plus a little bit more, and the mind-set of doing what is fun, easy and enjoyable—is the primary cause of economic and personal failure in life. On the other hand, disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the highroad to pride, self-esteem and personal satisfaction.

So setting priorities begins with your deciding what you want most in life and then organizing your time and activities so that everything you do is the most valuable use of your time in achieving those objectives.

With your larger, long-term priorities in order, you can much more easily decide upon your short-term priorities.

You can say that the process of setting short-term priorities begins with a pad of paper and a pen. Whenever you feel overwhelmed by too many things to do and too little time in which to do them, sit down, take a deep breath, and list all those tasks you need to accomplish. Although there is never enough time to do everything, there is always enough time to do the most important things, and to stay with them until they are done right.

Peter Drucker once said, "Efficiency is doing things right, but effectiveness is doing the right things." And this requires thought.

Once you have listed your tasks, ask yourself this question: "If I were to be called out of town for a month, and I could finish only one thing on this list, which one thing would it be?" Think it through, and circle that one item on your list. Then ask yourself: "If I could do only one more thing before I was called out of town for a month, what would it be?" This then becomes the second thing you circle on your list.

Perform this exercise five or six times until you have sorted out the highest priorities on your list. Then number each according to its importance. With these priorities, you are now ready to begin working effectively toward the achievement of your major goals.

Another popular method for setting priorities on your list, once you have determined your major goals or objectives, is the A-B-C-D-E method. You place one of those letters in the margin before each of the tasks on your list.

“A” stands for “very important; must do; severe negative consequences if not completed.”

“B” stands for “important; should do; but not as important as my ‘A’ tasks, and only minor negative consequences if not completed.”

“C” stands for “nice to do; but not as important as ‘A’ or ‘B,’ and no negative consequences for not completing.”

“D” stands for “delegate, or assign to someone else who can do the task in my place.”

“E” stands for “eliminate, whenever possible.”

When you use the A-B-C-D-E method, you can very easily sort out what is important and unimportant. This then will focus your time and attention on those items on your list that are most essential for you to do.

Once you can clearly see the one or two things that you should be doing, above all others, just say no to all diversions and distractions and focus single-mindedly on accomplishing those priorities.

Much stress that people experience in their work lives comes from working on low-priority tasks. The amazing thing is that as soon as you start working on your highest-value activity, all your stress disappears. You begin to feel a continuous stream of energy and enthusiasm. As you work toward the completion of something that is really important, you feel an increased sense of personal value and inner satisfaction. You experience a sensation of self-mastery and self-control. You feel calm, confident and capable.

Here are six ideas that you can use, every day, to help you set priorities and to keep you working at your best:

1. Take the time to be clear about your goals and objectives so that the priorities you set are moving you in the direction of something that is of value to you. Remember that many people scramble frantically to climb the ladder of success, only to find that it is leaning against the wrong building.
2. Develop a long time perspective and work on those things in the present that can have the greatest positive impact on your future. Maintain your balance in life by setting priorities in the areas of your health, your personal relationships and your financial goals.

3. Make the commitment to improve those aspects of your life that are most important to you. If you're in sales, learn how to be an excellent salesperson. If you're a parent, learn how to be an outstanding mother or father. The power is always on the side of the person with the best practical knowledge.
4. Be sure to take the time to do your work right the first time. The fewer mistakes you make, the less time you will waste going back and doing it over.
5. Remember that what counts is not the amount of time that you put in overall; rather, it's the amount of time that you spend working on high-priority tasks. You will always be paid for the results that you obtain, not merely the hours that you spend on the job.
6. Understand that the most important factor in setting priorities is your ability to make wise choices. You are always free to choose to engage in one activity or another. You may choose a higher-value activity or a lower-value activity, but once you have chosen, you must accept the consequences of your choice.

Resolve today to set clear priorities in every area of your life, and always choose the activities that will assure you the greatest health, happiness and prosperity in the long term. The long term comes soon enough, and every sacrifice that you make today will be rewarded with compound interest in the great future that lies ahead for you.

The Power of Charisma

By: Brian Tracy

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines charisma as "a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure."

Charisma is also that special quality of magnetism that each person has and that each person uses to a certain degree. You have a special charisma to the people who look up to you, who respect and admire you—the members of your family and your friends and coworkers. Whenever and wherever a person feels a positive emotion toward another, he imbues that person with charisma, or attractiveness.

In trying to explain charisma, some people speak of an "aura." This aura is a light that is invisible to most people, but not to everyone, and that radiates out from a person and affects the people around that person in a positive or negative way. The halo around the heads of saints and mystics in many religious paintings was the artist's attempt to depict the light that people reported seeing around the heads of these men and women when they were speaking or praying, or in an intense emotional state.

You also have an aura around you that most people cannot see but that is there, nevertheless. This aura affects the way people react and respond to you, either positively or negatively. There is a lot that you can do, and a lot of good reasons for you to do it, to control this aura and make it work in your best interests.

If you're in sales, this aura, reflecting your level of charisma, can have a major impact on the way your prospects and customers treat you and deal with you. Top salespeople seem to be far more successful than the average salespeople in getting along with their customers. They're always more welcome, more positively received and

more trusted than the others. They sell more, and they sell more easily. They make a better living, and they build better lives. Salespeople with charisma get far more pleasure out of their work and suffer far less from stress and rejection. The charismatic salesperson is almost invariably a top performer in his field and enjoys all the rewards that go with superior sales.

If you're in business, developing greater charisma can help you tremendously in working with your staff, your suppliers, your bankers, your customers and everyone else upon whom you depend for your success. People seem naturally drawn to those who possess charisma. They want to help them and support them. When you have charisma, people will open doors for you and bring you opportunities that otherwise would not have been available to you.

In your personal relationships, the quality of charisma can make your life more joyous, happier. People will naturally want to be around you. Members of your family and your friends will be far happier in your company, and you will have a greater influence on them, causing them to feel better about themselves and to do better at the important things in their lives.

There is a close association between personal charisma and success in life. Probably 85 percent of your success and happiness will come from your relationships and interactions with others. The more positively others respond to you, the easier it will be for you to get the things you want.

In essence, when we discuss charisma, we are talking about the law of attraction. This law has been stated in many different ways down through the centuries, but it basically says that you inevitably attract into your life the people and circumstances that harmonize with your dominant thoughts.

In a sense, you are a living magnet, and you are constantly radiating thought waves, like a radio station radiates sound waves, that are picked up by other people. Your thoughts, intensified by your emotions, as radio waves are intensified by electric impulses, go out from you and are picked up by anyone who is tuned in to a similar wavelength. You then attract into your life people, ideas, opportunities, resources, circumstances and anything else that is consistent with your dominant frame of mind.

The law of attraction also explains how you can build up your levels of charisma so that you can have a greater and more positive impact on the people whose cooperation, support and affection you desire.

The critical thing to remember about charisma is that it is largely based on perception. It is based on what people think about you. It is not so much reality as it is what people perceive you to be. For example, one person can create charisma in another person by speaking in glowing terms about that person to a third party. If you believe that you are about to meet an outstanding and important person, that person will tend to have charisma for you.

One of the most charismatic people in the world today is Mother Teresa of Calcutta. In a physical sense, she is a quiet, elderly, frail woman in poor health, and she wears a modest nun's habit. She might be ignored by a person passing her on the street, were it not for the tremendous charisma she has developed and for the fact that her appearance is so well-known to so many people as a result.

If someone told you that he was going to introduce you to a brilliant, self-made millionaire who was very quiet and unassuming about his success, you would almost naturally imbue that person with charisma, and in his presence, you would not act the same as you would if you had been told nothing at all. Charisma begins largely in the mind of the beholder.

Of course, lasting charisma depends more upon the person you really are than upon just the things you do. Nevertheless, you can build the perception of charisma for yourself by utilizing the 10 great powers of personality that seem to have a major impact on the way that people think and feel about you.

The first of these powers is the power of *purpose*. Men and women with charisma and personal magnetism almost invariably have a clear vision of who they are, of where they're going and of what they're trying to achieve. Leaders in sales and management have a vision of what they're trying to create and why they're doing what they're doing. They're focused on accomplishing some great purpose. They're decisive about every aspect of their lives. They know exactly what they want and what they have to do to get it. They plan their work and work their plan.

In more than 3,300 studies of leadership, in every book and article ever written on leadership, the quality of purpose, or vision, was one of the few qualities that was consistently used in describing leaders.

You can increase your charisma and the magnetism of your personality by setting clear goals for yourself, making plans to achieve them, and working on your plans with discipline and determination every day. The whole world seems to move aside for the person who knows exactly where he is going. In fact, the clearer you are about your purposes and goals, the more likely people will be to attribute other positive qualities to you. They will see you, or perceive you, as being a better and more admirable human being. And when you have clear goals, you begin attracting to yourself the people and opportunities necessary to make those goals a reality.

The second personality power is *self-confidence*. Men and women with charisma have an intense belief in themselves and in what they are doing. They are usually calm, cool and composed about themselves and their work. Your level of self-confidence is often demonstrated in your courage, your willingness to do whatever is necessary to achieve a purpose that you believe in.

People are naturally attracted to those who exude a sense of self-confidence, those who have an unshakable belief in their ability to rise above circumstances to attain their goals.

One of the ways you demonstrate self-confidence is by assuming that people naturally like you and accept you and want to do business with you. For example, one of the most powerful ways to close a sale is simply to assume that the prospect has decided to purchase the product or service, and then go on to wrap up the details. One of the best ways to achieve success in your relationships is to assume that people naturally enjoy your company and want to be around you, and then proceed on that basis. The very act of behaving in a self-confident manner will generate personal charisma in the eyes of others.

The third power you can develop is *enthusiasm*. The more excited you are about accomplishing something that is important to you, the more excited others will be

about helping you to do it. The fact is that emotions are contagious. The more passion you have for your life and your activities, the more charisma you will possess, and the more cooperation you will gain from others. Every great man or woman has been totally committed to a noble cause and, as a result, has attracted the support and encouragement of others—in many cases, thousands or millions of others.

The fourth personality power that you can develop is *expertise*, or competence. The more knowledgeable you are perceived to be in your field, the more charisma you will have among those who respect and admire that knowledge because of the impact it can have on their lives. This is also the power of excellence, of being recognized by others as an outstanding performer in your field. Men and women who do their jobs extremely well and who are recognized for the quality of their work are those who naturally attract the help and support of others. They have charisma.

The fifth power of personality that gives you charisma in the eyes of others is *thorough preparation*, detailed preparation, prior to undertaking any significant task. Whether you are calling on a prospect, meeting with your boss, giving a public talk or making any other kind of presentation, when you are well-prepared, it becomes clear to everyone. The careers of many young people are put onto the fast track as a result of their coming to an important meeting after having done all their homework.

Whether it takes you hours or even days, if an upcoming meeting or interaction is important, take the time to get on top of your subject. Be so thoroughly prepared that nothing can faze you. Think through and consider every possibility and every ramification. Often, this effort to be fully prepared will do more to generate the respect of others than anything else you can do.

Remember that the power is always on the side of the person who has done the most preparation and has the best notes. Everything counts. Leave nothing to chance. When you do something related to your work or career, take the time to do it right—in advance.

The sixth power that gives you charisma is *self-reliance*, or self-responsibility. The most successful men and women in America are intensely self-reliant. They look to themselves for the answers to their questions and problems. They never complain, and they never explain. They take complete ownership of projects. They volunteer for duties and step forward and accept accountability when things go wrong.

An amazing facet of human nature is that when you behave in a completely self-reliant manner, others will often be eager to help you achieve your goals. But if you seem to need the help and support of others, people will avoid you or do everything possible not to get involved with you.

One of the most admirable qualities of leaders, which lends a person charisma in the perception of others, is the capacity to step forward and take charge. The leader accepts complete responsibility for getting the job done, without making excuses and blaming anyone. When you become completely self-reliant, you experience a tremendous sense of control and power that enhances your feeling of well-being and that generates the charisma that is so important to you in attracting the help of others.

The seventh personality power is *image*. There is both interpersonal image and intrapersonal image. Intrapersonal image, or self-image, is the way you see yourself and think about yourself in any situation. This self-image has an inordinate impact on

the way you perform and on the way others see you and think about you. Your self-image plays an important part in your charisma.

The other type of image is interpersonal. This is the image or appearance that you convey to others. The way you look on the outside has an inordinate impact on the way people treat you and respond to you. Successful men and women are very aware of how they are coming across to others. They take a good deal of time to think through every aspect of their external appearance to assure that it is helping them rather than hurting them.

Remember that everything counts. If an element of your image is not building your charisma and your respect in the eyes of another person, it is lowering your charisma and your respect. Nothing is neutral. Everything is taken into the equation. Everything counts.

The three primary factors in personal appearance are clothes, grooming and accessories. Select your clothes with care. Before you go to an important meeting, stand in front of the mirror and ask yourself, "Do I look like one of the best people in my field?" If you don't feel that you look like one of the best people in your business, go back to the closet and change.

Look at the most successful people in your area of endeavor. What do they wear? How do they dress? How do they wear their hair? What kind of accessories do they use? Pattern yourself after the winners in your field, the people who already have personal magnetism and charisma. If you do what they do, over and over, you will eventually get the same results that they get.

The eighth form of personal power is *character*, or integrity. Men and women who possess the kind of charisma that arouses the enthusiastic support of others are invariably men and women with high values and principles. They are extremely realistic and honest with themselves and others. They have very clear ideals, and they continually aspire to live up to the highest that is in them. They speak well of people, and they guard their conversation, knowing that everything that they say is being remembered and recorded. They are aware that everything they do is contributing to the formation of their perception by others. Everything about their character is adding to or detracting from their level of charisma.

When you think of the most important men and women of any time, you think of men and women who aspired to greatness and who had high values for themselves and high expectations of others. When you make the decision to act consistent with the highest principles that you know, you begin to develop charisma. You begin to become the kind of person others admire and respect and want to emulate. You begin to attract into your life the help and support and encouragement of the kind of people you admire. You activate the law of attraction in the very best way.

The ninth power of personality is *self-discipline*, or self-mastery. Men and women of charisma are highly controlled. They have a tremendous sense of inner calm and outer resolve. They are well-organized, and they demonstrate willpower and determination in everything they do.

The very act of being well-organized, of having clear objectives and of having set clear priorities on your activities before beginning, gives you a sense of discipline and

control. It causes people to respect and admire you. When you then exert your self-discipline by persisting in the face of difficulties, your charisma rating goes up.

Men and women who achieve leadership positions, who develop the perception of charisma in others, are invariably those who possess indomitable willpower and the ability to persist in a good cause until success is achieved. The more you persist when the going gets rough, the more self-discipline and resolve you develop, and the more charisma you tend to have.

The tenth power that you can develop, which underlies all of the other powers that lead to charisma, is *result-orientation*. In the final analysis, people ascribe charisma to those men and women who they feel can most enable them to achieve important goals or objectives.

We develop great perceptions of those men and women we can count on to help us achieve what is important to us. Men and women who make great sales, or who establish admirable sales records, develop charisma in the minds and hearts of their coworkers and superiors. They are spoken about in the most positive way. Men and women who are responsible for companies or departments that achieve high levels of profitability also develop charisma. They develop what is called the "halo effect." They are perceived by others to be extraordinary men and women who are capable of great things. Their shortcomings are often overlooked, while their strong points are overemphasized. They become charismatic.

Charisma actually comes from working on yourself. It comes from liking and accepting yourself unconditionally as you do and say the specific things that develop within you a powerful, charismatic personality.

When you set clear goals and become determined and purposeful, backing those goals with unshakable self-confidence, you develop charisma. When you are enthusiastic and excited about what you are doing, when you are totally committed to achieving something worthwhile, you radiate charisma. When you take the time to study and become an expert at what you do, and then prepare thoroughly for any opportunity to use your knowledge, skill or experience, the perception that others have of you goes straight up. When you take complete responsibility and accept ownership, without making excuses or blaming others, you experience a sense of control that leads to the personal power that is the foundation of charisma. When you look like a winner in every respect, when you have the kind of external image that others admire, you build your charisma. When you develop your character by setting high standards and then disciplining yourself to live consistent with the highest principles you know, you become the kind of person who is admired and respected everywhere. You become the kind of person who radiates charisma to others. Finally, when you concentrate your energies on achieving the results that you have been hired to accomplish, the results that others expect of you, you develop the reputation for performance and achievement that inevitably leads to the perception of charisma.

You can develop the kind of charisma that opens doors for you by going to work on yourself, consistently and persistently, and becoming the kind of person everyone can admire and look up to. That's what charisma is all about.

The Power of Positive Self-Talk

By: Brian Tracy

Perhaps the most powerful influence on your attitude and personality is what you say to yourself, and believe. It is not what happens to you, but how you respond internally to what happens to you, that determines your thoughts and feeling and, ultimately, your actions. By controlling your inner dialogue, or “self-talk,” you can begin to assert control over every other dimension of your life.

Your self-talk—the words that you use to describe what is happening to you, and to discuss how you feel about external events—determines the quality and tone of your emotional life. When you see things positively and constructively and look for the good in each situation and each person, you have a tendency to remain naturally positive and optimistic. Since the quality of your life is determined by how you feel, moment to moment, one of your most important goals should be to use every psychological technique available to keep yourself thinking about what you want and to keep your mind off of what you don’t want, or what you fear.

Arnold Toynbee, the historian, developed what he called the “challenge-response theory” of history. In studying the rise and fall of 20 major world civilizations, Toynbee concluded that each civilization started out as a small group of people — as a village, as a tribe or in the case of the Mongol empire, as just three people who had survived the destruction of their small community.

Toynbee concluded that each of these small groups faced external challenges, such as hostile tribes. In order to survive, much less thrive, these small groups had to reorganize themselves to deal positively and constructively with these challenges.

By meeting each of these challenges successfully, the village or tribe would grow. Even greater challenges would be triggered as a result. And if this group of people continued to meet each challenge by drawing upon its resources and winning out, it would continue to grow until ultimately it became a nation-state and then a civilization covering a large geographical area.

Toynbee looked at the 21 great civilizations of human history, ending with the American civilization, and concluded that these civilizations began to decline and fall apart when their citizens and leaders lost the will or ability to rise to the inevitable external challenges occasioned by their very size and power.

Toynbee's theory of civilizations can be applicable to our life as well.

You are continually faced with challenges and difficulties, with problems and disappointments, with temporary setbacks and defeats. They are an unavoidable and inevitable part of being human. But, as you draw upon your resources to respond effectively to each challenge, you grow and become a stronger and better person. In fact, without those setbacks, you could not have learned what you needed to know and developed the qualities of your character to where they are today.

Much of your ability to succeed comes from the way you deal with life. One of the characteristics of superior men and women is that they recognize the inevitability

of temporary disappointments and defeats, and they accept them as a normal and natural part of life. They do everything possible to avoid problems, but when problems come, superior people learn from them, rise above them, and continue onward in the direction of their dreams.

Dr. Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania has written a fascinating book based on his 25 years of research into this subject. It's titled *Learned Optimism*. In this book, Dr. Seligman explains the basic response patterns of both positive and negative people. As a result of his many years of work in cognitive therapy, and the use of exhaustive testing, he finds, quite simply, that optimistic people tend to interpret events in such a way that they keep their minds positive and their emotions under control.

Optimists develop the habit of talking to themselves in constructive ways. Whenever they experience an adversity, they immediately describe it to themselves in such a way that it loses its ability to trigger negative emotions and feelings of helplessness.

Dr. Seligman says that there are three basic differences in the reactions of optimists and pessimists. The first difference is that the optimist sees a setback as *temporary*, while the pessimist sees it as *permanent*. The optimist sees an unfortunate event, such as an order that falls through or a sales call that fails, as a temporary event, something that is limited in time and that has no real impact on the future. The pessimist, on the other hand, sees negative events as permanent, as part of life and destiny.

For example, let's say that the optimistic salesperson makes 10 calls on likely prospects, and every one of those calls is unsuccessful. The optimist simply interprets this as a temporary event and a matter of averages or probabilities. The optimist concludes that, with every temporary failure, he is moving closer to the prospect who will turn into a sale. The optimist dismisses the event and goes on cheerfully to the 11th and 12th prospects.

The pessimist sees the same situation differently. The pessimist has a tendency to conclude that 10 unsuccessful sales calls is an indication that the economy is terrible and that there is no market for his product. The pessimist generalizes and begins to see the situation and his career as hopeless. While the optimist just shrugs it off and gets on with the next call, the pessimist becomes discouraged and loses heart and enthusiasm for the hard work of prospecting.

The second difference between the optimist and the pessimist is that the optimist sees difficulties as *specific*, while the pessimist sees them as *pervasive*. This means that when things go wrong for the optimist, he looks at the event as an isolated incident largely disconnected from other things that are going on in his life.

For example, if something you were counting on failed to materialize and you interpreted it to yourself as being an unfortunate event, but something that happens in the course of life and business, you would be reacting like an optimist. The pessimist, on the other hand, sees disappointments as being pervasive. That is, to him they are indications of a problem or shortcoming that pervades every area of life.

If a pessimist worked hard to put together a business deal and it collapsed, he would tend to assume that the deal did not work out was because the product or the

company or the economy was in poor shape and the whole business was hopeless. The pessimist would tend to feel helpless, unable to make a difference and out of control of his destiny.

The third difference between optimists and pessimists is that optimists see events as *external*, while pessimists interpret events as *personal*. When things go wrong, the optimist will tend to see the setback as result from external factors over which one has little control.

If the optimist is cut off in traffic, for example, instead of getting angry or upset, he will simply downgrade the importance of the event by saying something like, "oh, well, I guess that person is just having a bad day."

The pessimist has a tendency to take everything personally. If the pessimist is cut off in traffic, he will react as though the other driver has deliberately acted to upset and frustrate him. The pessimist will become angry and negative and want to strike out and get even. Often, he will honk his horn or yell at the other driver.

There is a natural tendency in all of us to react emotionally when our expectations are frustrated in any way. When something we wanted and hoped for fails to materialize, we feel a temporary sense of disappointment and unhappiness. We feel disillusioned. We react as though we have been punched in the "emotional solar plexus".

The optimistic person, however, soon moves beyond this disappointment. He responds quickly to the adverse event and interprets it as being temporary, specific and external to himself. The optimist takes full control of his inner dialogue and counters the negative feelings by immediately reframing the event so that it appear positive in some way.

Napoleon Hill, who, prior to writing his best-selling books on success, interviewed 500 of the most successful people in America, concluded that "Contained within a setback or disappointment is the seed of an equal or greater advantage or benefit." And this is one of the great secrets of success.

Since your conscious mind can hold only one thought at a time, either positive or negative, if you deliberately choose a positive thought to dwell upon, you keep your mind optimistic and your emotions positive. Since your thoughts and feelings determine your actions, you will tend to be a more constructive person, and you will move much more rapidly toward the goals that you have chosen.

It all comes down to the way you talk to yourself on a regular basis. In our courses of problem solving and decisions making, we encourage people to respond to problems by changing their language from negative to positive. Instead of using the word *problem*, we encourage people to use the word *situation*. You see, a problem is something that you deal with. The event is the same. It's the way you interpret the event to yourself that makes it sound and appear completely different.

Even better than *situation* is the word *challenge*. Whenever you have a difficulty, immediately reframe it and choose to view it as a challenge. Rather than saying, "I have a problem," say, "I have an interesting challenge facing me." The word *challenge* is inherently positive. It is something that you rise to that makes you

stronger and better. It is the same situation, only the word that you are using to describe it is different.

The best of all possible words is the word *opportunity*. When you are faced with a difficulty of any kind, instead of saying, "I have a problem," you can say, "I am faced with an unexpected opportunity." And if you concentrate your powers on finding out what that opportunity is—even if it is only a valuable lesson—you will certainly find it. As the parable says, "Seek and ye shall find, for all who seek find it."

One of my favorite affirmative statements, which I use to deal with any unexpected difficulty, is this: "Every situation is a positive situation if viewed as an opportunity for growth and self-mastery. Whenever something goes wrong, immediately neutralize its negative power by quickly reciting this statement.

If you are in sales, and your method of prospecting is not generating the results that you desire, you can view it as an opportunity for growth and self-mastery. The adversity you are facing may be meant to indicate to you that there is a better way to approach this task. Perhaps you should be prospecting in a different place, or with different people, or using a different script or a different method. Perhaps your difficulty is simply part of the process of developing the persistence and tenacity that you need to become successful in any kind of market. The difference between the winner and the loser is that the winner faces and deals with the adversity constructively, while the loser allows the adversity to overwhelm him.

The hallmark of the fully mature, fully functioning, self-actualizing personality is the ability to be objective and unemotional when caught up in the inevitable storms of daily life. The superior person has the ability to continue talking to himself in a positive and optimistic way, keeping his mind calm, clear and completely under control. The mature personality is more relaxed and aware and capable of interpreting events more realistically and less emotionally than is the immature personality. As a result, the mature person exerts a far greater sense of control and influence over his environment, and is far less likely to be angry, upset, or distracted.

The starting point in the process of becoming a highly effective person is to monitor and control your self-talk every minute of the day. Keep your thoughts and your words positive and consistent with your goals, and keep your mind focused on what you want to do and the person you want to be.

Here are five ideas you can use to help you to be a more positive and optimistic person:

First, resolve in advance that no matter what happens, you will not allow it to get you down. You will respond in a constructive way. You will take a deep breath, relax and look for whatever good the situation may contain. When you make this decision in advance, you mentally prepare yourself so that you are not knocked off balance when things go wrong, as they inevitably will.

Second, neutralize any negative thoughts or emotions by speaking to yourself positively all the time. Say things like, "I feel healthy! I feel happy! I feel terrific!" As you go about your job, say to yourself, I like myself, and I love my work!" Say things like, "Today is a great day; it's wonderful to be alive!" According to the law of expression, whatever is expressed is impressed. Whatever you say to yourself or

others is impressed deeply into your subconscious mind and is likely to become a permanent part of your personality.

Third, look upon the inevitable setbacks that you face as being temporary, specific and external. View the negative situations as a single event that is not connected to other potential events and that is caused largely by external factors over which you can have little control. Simply refuse to see the event as being in any way permanent, pervasive or indicative of personal incompetence or inability.

Fourth, remember that it is impossible to learn and grow and become a successful person without adversity and difficulties. You must contend with and rise above them in order to become a better person. Welcome each difficulty by saying, "That's good!" and then look into the situation to find the good in it.

Finally, keep your thoughts on your goals and dreams, on the person you are working toward becoming. When things go wrong temporarily, respond by saying to yourself, "I believe in the perfect outcome of every situation in my life." Resolve to be cheerful and pleasant, and resist every temptation toward negativity and disappointment. View a disappointment as an opportunity to grow stronger, and about it to yourself and others in a positive and optimistic way.

When you practice positive self-talk, and keep your words and your mental pictures consistent with your goals and dreams, there is nothing that can stop you from being the success you are meant to be.

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